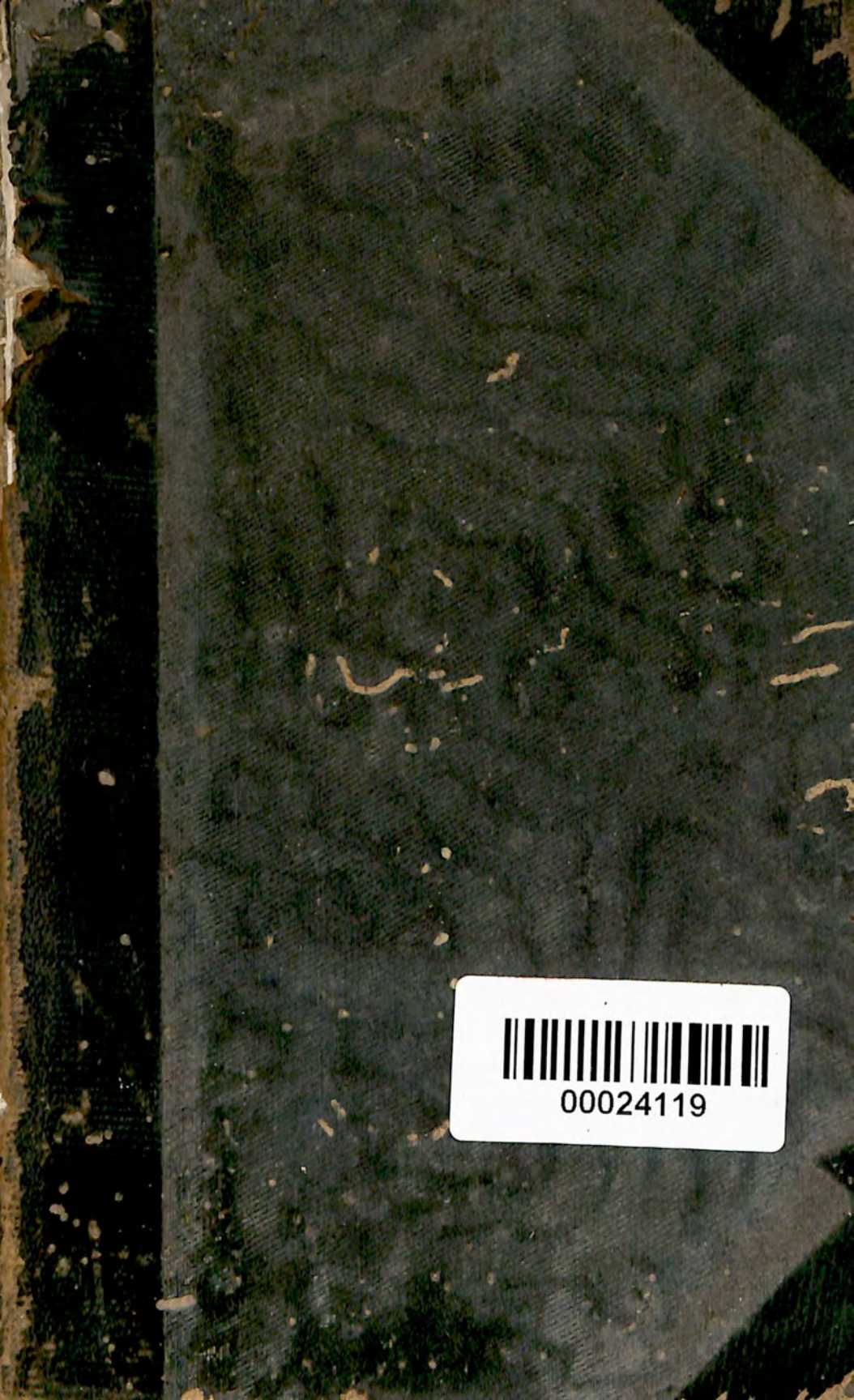
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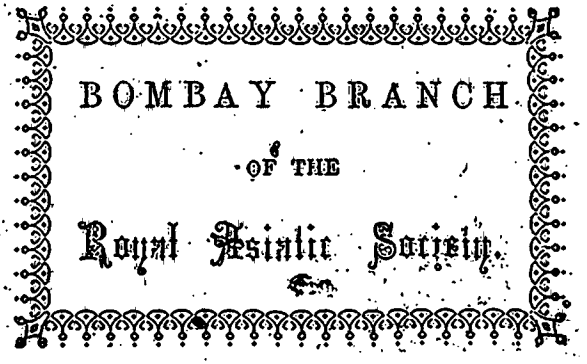

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MEMOIRS

OF

HORACE WALPOLE

AND

HIS CONTEMPORARIES;

INCLUDING NUMEROUS

ORIGINAL LETTERS CHIEFLY FROM STRAWBERRY HILL.

EDITED BY

ELIOT WARBURTON, ESQ.,

AUTHOR OF "THE CRESCENT AND THE CROSS," ETC., ETC.

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IN TWO VOLUMES.

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MEMOIRS

OF

HORACE WALPOLE.

CHAPTER I.

STRAWBERRY HILL.—1736 TO 1746.

DURING the eventful period described in the preceding chapters, the younger Horace Walpole was generally in town, floating buoyantly on the stream of politics, and watching the course of events; but after the stir of the Scottish rebellion had subsided, he returned to his customary avocations with renewed spirit. Politics were, however, soon to be superseded by poetry, and the statesman gave way to the fine gentleman.

Walpole had many fair acquaintances, and with a species of refined gallantry then not entirely out of season, he endeavoured to recommend himself to their good opinion, by publishing his estimate of their attractions. From time immemorial, it has been the

privilege of the poet to draw his inspiration from the personal graces of the more admirable examples of the sex, with whom it may have been his exceeding good fortune to have become intimate. It matters little whether such example be married or single, maid, or widow; neither crusty father, nor jealous husband, nor testy guardian has any right to interfere with the poet's privilege. Where beauty exists, he claims to be her herald, and his blazoning is that which outlasts all others.

The Sacharissa of Waller is remembered, while the armorial bearings of Sunderland are forgotten, and the Leonora of Tasso has a prouder and more lasting title to fame, than that derived from the heraldic glories of the House of Este.

One of Walpole's happiest attempts at verse was a familiar poem called "The Beauties—an epistle to Mr. Eckardt the painter," in which he remonstrates with the artist for lamenting that the beauties so renowned in classical story, had flourished so long before his time, and refers by name to the numerous females then existing in society, whose personal attractions might successfully rival the fairest of the fair deities of Greece or Rome. This poem, he says, met with marked success:

"On Britain's isle observe the fair,
And curious, choose your models there,
Such patterns as shall raise your name
To rival sweet Correggio's fame.
Each single piece shall be a test,
And Zeuxis' patchwork but a jest,

Who ransacked Greece, and culled the age
To bring one goddess on the stage;
On your each canvas we'll admire
The charms of the whole heavenly choir."*

The poem contains some prettily turned compliments on his fair contemporaries—not unworthy the pupil of Waller: for example,

" With her the bright dispensing fair,
Whose beauty gilds the morning air,
And bright as her attendant son
The new aurora Lyttelton.
Such Guido's pencil heavenly tipped
And in ethereal colours dipped,
In measured dance to tuneful song
Drew the sweet goddess, as along
Heaven's azure 'neath their bright feet spread,
The buxom Hours the fairest led."†

Although in the autumn of 1743, Walpole is found writing so enthusiastically in praise of a town life, as to assert that if he were a Physician he would "prescribe nothing but Recipe CCCLXV drachm. Londin,"‡—he began to sigh for a change.

Walpole having already contracted a habit of literary composition, was therefore naturally inclined towards the leisure of retirement. Though extremely partial to London, and not averse to society, the distaste he felt or affected for a political life, and the increasing pleasure he found in cultivating a taste for literature and art, and in forming a collection of

* "Lord Orford's Works." Vol. i. p. 20.
† Ibid. Page 22.
‡ "Walpole Letters." Vol. i. p. 309.

articles of *vertu*, made him anxious to remove from the perpetual stir of the metropolis to some quiet retreat in the country, where he could, uninterruptedly, pursue the studies that had become so agreeable to him. There was no slight difficulty in the way of obtaining his wishes in this respect—for though his inclinations were for a country residence, he could not completely abandon the town.

He sought in the suburban villages for the Tusculum which should satisfy all his town-bred wants, while it realized his rural predilections; but a hundred years ago, the travels of a gentleman in search of a villa, were much more protracted than they need be in the present over-built age. Then Chelsea aspired to be a watering place, and Chiswick was considered in the provinces, and though both boasted of country houses, they were not likely to suit a gentleman of education, whose taste had been improved by observations of continental architecture, both Palladian and Gothic. Now, any of our fashionable auctioneers and land-agents can show an almost endless list of villa residences in every desirable locality—and difficult indeed to please must be the individual who is not to be satisfied out of such a selection.

For a short time Horace rented a small house at Windsor, but the beauty of its neighbourhood could not counterbalance its want of sufficient accommodation. It was also found to be at too great a distance from town, and he gave it up, and looked out for a more convenient residence. Till this was discovered, he

contented himself with his house in Arlington Street, where he pursued his literary and artistic studies, with facilities he could not expect to meet in the country.

Though the death of the Earl of Orford had apparently extinguished all political aspirations in his youngest son, Horace still continued to perform his duties in Parliament, and to enter into the party questions and party intrigues which were then carried on, with as much animosity as in the most stirring portion of the Walpole rule. At the general election, in the year 1747, Horace was again elected a member for Callington, and for several subsequent years he became one of the most active among the minor pieces in the political game then being played. There is little question that he took this trouble upon himself, less with a prospect of advancing his own interests, than with a hope of causing annoyance to the leading members of the party who had driven his father from office. Against them his animosity was very great; its intensity may be imagined from the fact that for several years it overpowered his repugnance to a public life; and though often expressing his distaste for a parliamentary career, he not only in his correspondence enters into the most copious details respecting the business before both Houses of Parliament, but commenced a regular record of the political events of the year—particularly devoting himself to the task of reporting the debates in the House of Commons.

In the meantime he continued his search for a

villa, and at last found one, that fulfilled all his expectations. One of those indefatigable antiquaries who spend their time and labour in tracing great effects to very small causes, made the notable discovery that the site of the town mansion of the Duke of Wellington, was originally occupied by an apple stall,—the country residence selected by Horace Walpole had not quite so humble an origin; nevertheless a building that had been raised by the savings and pilferings of a roguish domestic, sufficiently contrasted in its origin with the imposing character of the future structure.

Towards the close of the seventeenth century, the Earl of Bradford's coachman retired from service, and built a snug little "country box," near the pretty village of Twickenham—to which his neighbours attached the name of "Chopped-straw-hall," with a sly insinuation at the means by which noblemen's coach-horses may be kept on a diet low enough to satisfy a Poor Law Commissioner. Possibly this may have been the identical Crœsus of the hammercloth, immortalized by its subsequent proprietor, who left a large fortune to his son, provided he never married *a Maid of Honour*—he having had so much trouble in acting as charioteer for young ladies holding that dignity, as to threaten to disinherit his heir should he resume the connexion even as husband, instead of coachman. Be this as it may, Lord Bradford's coachman built "Chopped-straw-hall," and soon afterwards, either out of desire

for company, or a wish to increase his income, he let it out in apartments; no doubt to drudging citizens, willing to pay well for the luxury of country lodgings, and ambitious of pushing further into the provinces than Islington and Hackney.

After a while, "Chopped-straw-hall," could boast of a higher class of tenants, for whose accommodation its far-seeing landlord took some pains to prepare it. It was in a delightful neighbourhood, within easy distances of palaces and parks—and while offering every attraction to people of fashion, was a charming retreat for any one who sought retirement in a position well calculated for its full enjoyment. An author, for instance, desirous of pure air and quiet, must have looked upon "Chopped-straw-hall," as a sort of earthly paradise: and so it seems to have been considered by Colley Cibber, a writer of no mean note in his day, who wrote here at least one of his works, the play called "The Refusal, or the Lady's Philosophy." But if it was found favourable to the Drama it was not less so to Divinity, for here Talbot, afterwards Bishop of Durham, exercised, during the space of eight years, an active pastoral superintendence over his flock. Père Courayer, a French ecclesiastic of great piety and liberality, whose eccentric characteristics Mrs. Montagu has preserved in a humourous description of a visit to him in his lodgings, was another of the celebrities who found a pleasant retirement within its walls. A still higher honour was in store for it, for it next

became the residence of Henry Bridges, Marquis of Carnarvon, subsequently Duke of Chandos.

A house that would satisfy the demands of such different personages must, one would think, have been a remarkable edifice—it might have received considerable improvements since the first erection, which was owing to the substitution of chopped straw for oats and beans; but it is more probable that its chief attraction at this time, was its agreeable position, and its contiguity to Richmond and Hampton Court.

Its next tenant, though neither peer, bishop, nor author, was quite as celebrated in her day as either; this was a certain Mrs. Chenevix,* who kept a toy-shop in London, in as much repute towards the middle of the 18th century, as the quaker's by Lowndes Square is about the middle of the 19th. She obtained a lease of this "desirable country-house," and immediately let it to John Philip Sackville, the second son of Lionel, Duke of Dorset, who resided there for about two years. It was at this period that Horace Walpole was looking out for a residence at a convenient distance from town, and the recommendations of the house Lord Sackville had just quitted, appear to have made a decided impression upon him. He had numerous friends in

* She had also connexions at Court, one of whom was chaplain to the Princess Royal, and aspired to the hand of a Maid of Honour, one of the nieces of Lady Sundon, but it was a long time before the Queen's *confidante* could reconcile herself to the toy-shop. This was done at last, and the chaplain was transformed into a bishop. "Memoirs of Lady Sundon."

that neighbourhood, in which he had passed the pleasantest part of his childhood, and Kew, and Ham, Richmond, Petersham, and Hampton Court, offered an inexhaustible stock of grateful associations. When a boy, on his own pony, he had followed the hounds with Sir Robert, during his rangership of Richmond Park, and with some favourite schoolfellows had explored the whole country on both sides the Thames.

He had scarcely seen Mrs. Chenevix's place, when he felt an ardent longing to possess it. This, however, was not so easy to gratify: the coachman had gone to give an account of his delinquencies, and the property now belonged to three minors of the name of Mortimer. His immediate neighbour too did not promise to be a very agreeable one, as he was the identical Richard Francklin who printed that scurrilous paper "The Craftsman," which Pulteney and Bolingbroke had supported to attack Sir Robert Walpole. Nothing, however, could daunt him. He first took Mrs. Chenevix's lease in May 1747, and then, with the assistance of an Act of Parliament, purchased the whole property, including the house of Francklin. The complete settlement of the affair was a work of time, and his interviews with the fair vendor of the property furnished him with no slight amusement.

"I hope to get my Bill finished in ten days," he writes in May, 1749, "I have scrambled it through the Lords; but altogether, with the many difficulties and plagues, I am a good deal out of humour; my purchases hitch, and new proprietors start out of the

ground like the crop of soldiers in the Metamorphosis. I expect but an unpleasant summer; my indolence and inattention are not made to wade through leases and deeds. Mrs. Chenevix brought me one yesterday to sign, and her sister Bertrand, the toy-woman of Bath, for a witness. I showed them my cabinet of enamels instead of treating them with white wine. The Bertrand said, 'Sir, I hope you don't trust all sorts of ladies with this cabinet.' What an entertaining assumption of dignity!"*

This acquisition gave him immense gratification. In June 1747, he thus describes it:—

"The house is so small, that I can send it you in a letter to look at; the prospect is as delightful as possible, commanding the river, the town, and Richmond Park; and being situated on a hill descends to the Thames through two or three little meadows, where I have some Turkish sheep and two cows, all studied in their colours for becoming the view. This little rural *bijou* was Mrs. Chenevix's, the toy-woman *à la mode*, who in every dry season is to furnish me with the best rain water from Paris, and now and then with some Dresden china cows, who are to figure like wooden classics in a library; so I shall grow as much a shepherd as any swain in the Astræa."†

Three days afterwards he writes to his cousin Conway;

"You perceive from my date that I am got into a new camp, and have left my tub at Windsor. It is a little plaything house that I got out of Mrs. Chenevix's shop, and is the prettiest bauble you ever saw. It is set in enamelled meadows with filagree hedges:

A small Euphrates through the piece is rolled,
And little finches wave their wings in gold.

Two delightful roads, that you would call dusty, supply me continually with coaches and chaises, and barges as solemn as Barons of the Exchequer, move under my windows; Richmond Hill and Ham Walks bound my prospect; but, thank God! the Thames is

* "Walpole Letters." Vol. ii. p. 280. † Ibid. Vol. ii. p. 191.

between me and the Duchess of Queensberry. Dowagers as plenty as flounders inhabit all around, and Pope's ghost is just now skimming under my window by a most poetical moonlight. I have about land enough to keep such a farm as Noah's, when he set up in the ark with a pair of each kind; but my cottage is rather cleaner than I believe his was after they had been cooped up together forty days. The Chenevixes had tricked it out for themselves; up two pair of stairs is what they call Mr. Chenevix's library, furnished with three maps, one shelf, a bust of Sir Isaac Newton, and a lame telescope without any glasses. Lord John Sackville *predecessed* me here, and instituted certain games called *Cricketalia*, which have been celebrated this very evening in honour of him in a neighbouring meadow."*

To this place, though so small and inconvenient, the purchaser could easily reconcile himself, but he could not tolerate its name. "Chopped Straw Hall", was inexpressibly more vulgar even than his predecessor's idea of a library. Horace first of all merely dated his letters from Twickenham; but this was far from satisfying him. His residence ought, he thought, to possess some distinctive appellation; of a very different character, however, to that which the honest coachman had provided for it. Possibly, the new owner would have procured one in some other way, had he not in looking over an old lease found the land described as "Strawberry Hill Shot." He hailed the discovery with delight; henceforth all his letters from his new residence were dated "Strawberry Hill," and it is not too much to say, by that name the place will be remembered long after every vestige of the residence has disappeared.

* "Walpole Letters." Vol. ii. p. 192.

Horace now became extremely busy; planting, farming, and building, and in the following year he was able to state that he had turned the citizen's little house into an elegant villa.* Still he went on. To an active mind like his, every advance he made only induced him to strive to effect greater progress. He persuaded the son of Dr. Bentley, the critic, who was a clever artist, to come and live with him, to make sketches and plans for a thousand projected improvements. Towards the close of the year 1748, he writes from Strawberry Hill, where he was keeping Christmas, to Sir Horace Mann, inquiring if he ever knew a more absolute country gentleman? for that he was now possessed of about fourteen acres, and was making a terrace the whole breadth of the garden, on the brow of a natural hill, with meadows at the foot, and commanding the river, the village, Richmond Hill, and the park, and part of Kingston.†

His ignorance of horticulture at first embarrassed him a little, to which he thus amusingly refers:—

"My present and sole occupation is planting, in which I have made great progress, and talk very learnedly with the nurserymen, except that now and then a lettuce run to seed overturns all my botany, as I have more than once mistaken it for a curious West Indian

* "I have made a vast plantation," he says, introductory to a true Walpole jest. "Lord Leicester told me the other day that he heard I would not buy some old china, because I was laying out all my money in trees. 'Yes,' said I, 'my Lord, I used to love blue trees, but now I like green ones.'"—"Walpole Letters." Vol. ii. p. 272.

† "Walpole Letters." Vol. ii. p. 253.

flowering shrub. Then the deliberation with which trees grow, is extremely inconvenient to my natural impatience. I lament living in so barbarous an age, when we are coming to so little perfection in gardening. I am persuaded that a hundred and fifty years hence it will be as common to remove oaks a hundred and fifty years old, as it is now to transplant tulip roots."*

It is less than a hundred years since this was written, and we have advanced very far towards the perfection the writer so confidently anticipated. Both horticulture and arboriculture have made immense progress with us. Our gardens and hot-houses contain a thousand marvels of which the sanguine mind of Horace Walpole never dreamt, and the transplanting of trees of considerable girth has been practised with success for many years.

After the lapse of another year or two, Lord Bradford's coachman could no longer have identified his old habitation. The plain little country-house had expanded into an imposing sort of Gothic mansion. Instead of Mr. Chenevix's library up two pair of stairs, with its primitive furniture, there was a handsome chamber erected which was to contain more books than the whole of the original house could have held; and the rooms were multiplying into a variety that would have astonished as much as it would have bewildered the simple minds of the toy-shop woman, had she returned to her former Tusculum. All sorts of things were being collected from every possible quarter, to furnish appropriately these various apartments; and the resources of a handsome income, and

* "Walpole Letters." Vol. ii. p. 236.

the liberality of numerous active friends, were lavished to secure what was necessary to render Strawberry Hill worthy of its possessor.*

Horace, much as he had on his hands, found time for similar employment in behalf of those of his friends who shared his rage for improvement and taste for the Gothic. Among others he had been experimenting on the mansion of Mr. Rigby, when, at his suggestion, walls and square gardens were demolished, lawns were created, a portico erected, groves planted, ponds removed, and the domain ornamented with flowering shrubs and Kent fences.

Horace had long since abandoned his first notion of making his new house nothing more than the ordinary residence of a country gentleman; it had risen to the honours of a mansion. It was now assuming a castellated air, and in a letter to his friend Montagu he absolutely styles it "Strawberry Castle;" adding, "Did I tell you that I have found a text in Deuteronomy to authorize my future battlements? 'When thou a buildest a new house, then shalt thou make a battlement for thy roof, that thou bring not blood upon thy house, if any man fall from thence.'"†

These battlements were raised, but they were so

* He condescended occasionally to beg assistance. In September, 1749, he mentions his intention of applying to the Duke of Bedford ("Walpole Letters." Vol. ii. p. 305.); and in January of the following year he engages his friend, Sir Horace Mann, to ransack Italy for "fragments of old painted glass or any thing." Ibid. Vol. ii. p. 313.

† Ibid. Vol. ii. p. 305.

far from being substantial, that they subsequently gave rise to a jest of one of the architect's witty friends, who averred he had survived at least half a dozen sets of them.

Walpole's building, and all his other undertakings were nearly brought to a sudden conclusion towards the close of the year 1749, by a rencontre with Maclean the highwayman, who robbed him in Hyde Park, and very nearly killed him, for Maclean's pistol accidentally went off; the ball glanced along his face, taking off part of the skin, and stunned him fer a time. He mentions the circumstance in one of his communications to his friends at Florence,* but subsequently refers to it more at length in a periodical publication.†

Early in June 1752, he writes to a friend that he is leading "a rural life, has had a sheep-shearing, a hay-making, a syllabub under the cow, and a fishing of three gold fish out of his pond, a present for his neighbour. Mrs. Clive." These little creatures, of which he was very fond, were multiplying their numbers rapidly, and some had grown to the size of small perch. Mr. Bentley was then with him, finishing a series of drawings for Gray's Odes.

In the year 1745 Walpole had written an epilogue to "Tamerlane," on the suppression of the rebellion, to be spoken by the celebrated Mrs. Pritchard, in the character of the Comic Muse. It is a sort of congra-

* "Walpole Letters." Vol. ii. p. 307.

† "Lord Orford's Works."

tulation on the danger the stage has escaped by the overthrow of the Pretender and his Popish adherents, whose triumph, it is assumed, would have placed the drama under the leaden rule of monkish laureates, and Inquisitor Lord Chamberlains.

A happier effort was his fable, called "the Entail," which was occasioned by his having been asked whether, as he had built Strawberry Hill and adorned it with the portraits of his ancestors, he did not intend to entail it on his family? It is in the style of the lighter efforts of Cowper, and is worthy a place beside them. Mr. Walpole also employed his pen as a contributor to periodical literature, and came forward as a prose essayist in the same light and playful style which had rendered so popular the names of Addison and Steele. The second number of a new literary journal, called "The Museum," contained a paper by him with the title of "A scheme for raising a large sum of money for the use of the Government by laying a tax on message cards and notes." The introduction is a smart quiz upon existing antiquarianism, and the remainder is full of happy hits upon the female follies of the time. This was followed in No. 5 of the same journal by another contribution from the same pen, which took the shape of a title-page and chapter headings, of a projected "History of Good Breeding." It possesses much of the drollery of Swift without his indecency.

Walpole's taste for the peculiar style of architecture to which he had exclusively committed himself was not shared by all his friends. Sir Horace Mann was one

of those who could never reconcile themselves to it—his long residence in Italy, and familiarity with more classical styles of building, sufficiently accounts for this. Yet, though no admirer of his friend's taste, he was his zealous assistant, and several of the most valuable treasures of Strawberry Hill were procured by Sir Horace Mann. Walpole often endeavoured to make him a convert to his own opinions on architecture, but without success.

The example set by the Lord of Strawberry Hill was eagerly followed, and such was the rage for improvements in the new taste that it threatened a complete change in the aspect of country-houses. Italian villas, which have since been in such prodigious request, were despised by the advocates of the Gothic. On this subject Horace Walpole writes to his friend at Florence, in August, 1750, wishing he could behold these novelties. He averred that the country wore a new face as everybody was improving; and as they did not fortify their plantations with intrenchments of walls and high hedges, the passenger had the benefit of them. He considered that the temples and bridges, which were generally Gothic or Chinese, gave a whimsical air of novelty that was very pleasing.

Much the best description of the new edifice is from the pen of the amateur architect, and therefore we need offer no apology for introducing it here.

HORACE WALPOLE TO SIR HORACE MANN.

"Strawberry Hill, June 12, 1753.

"I could not rest any longer with the thought of your having

no idea of a place of which you hear so much, and therefore desired Mr. Bentley to draw you as much idea of it as the post would be persuaded to carry from Twickenham to Florence. The enclosed enchanted little landscape, then, is Strawberry Hill; and I will try to explain as much of it to you as will help to let you know whereabouts we are when we are talking to you; for it is uncomfortable in so intimate a correspondence as ours, not to be exactly master of every spot where one another is writing, or reading, or sauntering. This view of the castle* is what I have finished, and is the only side that will be at all regular. Directly before it is an open grove, through which you see a field, which is bounded by a serpentine wood, of all kinds of trees, and flowering shrubs, and flowers. The lawn before the house is situated on the top of a small hill, from whence to the left you see the town and church of Twickenham, encircling a turn of the river, that looks exactly like a seaport in miniature. The opposite shore is a most delicious meadow, bounded by Richmond Hill, which loses itself in the noble woods of the park to the end of the prospect on the right, where is another turn of the river, and the suburbs of Kingston as luckily placed as Twickenham is on the left; and a natural terrace on the brow of my hill, with meadows of my own down to the river, commands both extremities. Is not this a tolerable prospect? You must figure that all this is perpetually enlivened by a navigation of boats and barges, and by a road below my terrace, with coaches, post chaises, waggons, and horsemen, constantly in motion, and the fields speckled with cows, horses, and sheep.

"Now you shall walk into the house. The bow window below leads into a little parlour, hung with a stone-colour Gothic paper, and Jackson's Venetian prints, which I could never endure while they pretended, infamous as they are, to be after Titian, &c., but when I gave them the air of barbarous bas-reliefs, they succeeded to a miracle: it is impossible, at first sight, not to conclude that they contain the history of Attila or Tottila, done about the very æra. From hence, under two gloomy arches, you come to the hall

* It was a view of the south side towards the north-east.

and staircase, which it is impossible to describe to you, as it is the most particular and chief beauty of the castle. Imagine the walls covered with I call it paper, but it is really paper painted in perspective, to represent Gothic fretwork; the lightest Gothic balustrade to the staircase, adorned with antelopes (our supporters) bearing shields; lean windows, fattened with rich saints in painted glass, and a vestibule open with three arches on the landing-place, and niches full of trophies of old coats of mail, Indian shields made of rhinoceros' hides, broadswords, quivers, long-bows, arrows, and spears—all *supposed* to be taken by Sir Terry Robsart,* in the Holy Wars.

"But as none of this regards the enclosed drawing, I will pass to that. The room on the ground floor nearest to you is a bedchamber, hung with yellow paper and prints, framed in a new manner, invented by Lord Cardigan; that is, with black and white borders printed. Over this is Mr. Chute's bedchamber, hung with red in the same manner. The bow-window room one pair of stairs, is not yet finished; but in the tower beyond it is the charming closet where I am now writing to you. It is hung with green paper and water-colour pictures; has two windows; the one in the drawing looks to the garden, the other to the beautiful prospect; and the top of each glutted with the richest painted glass of the arms of England, crimson roses, and twenty other pieces of green, purple, and historic bits. I must tell you, by the way, that the castle, when finished, will have two and thirty windows enriched with painted glass.

"In this closet, which is Mr. Chute's collection of arms, are two presses, with books of heraldry and antiquities, Madame de Sevigné's letters, and any French books that relate to her and her acquaintance. Out of this closet is the room where we always live, hung with a blue and white paper in stripes, adorned with festoons, and a thousand plump chairs, couches, and luxurious settees, covered with linen of the same pattern; and with a bow-window commanding the

* An ancestor of Sir Robert Walpole, who was Knight of the Garter.

prospect, and gloomed with limes that shade half each window, already darkened with painted glass in chiaroscuro, set in deep blue glass. Under this room is a cool little hall, where we generally dine, hung with paper to imitate Dutch tiles.

"I have described so much, that you will begin to think that all the accounts I used to give you of the diminutiveness of our habitation were fabulous; but it is really incredible how small most of the rooms are. The only two good chambers I shall have, are not yet built; they will be an eating-room and a library: each twenty by thirty, and the latter fifteen feet high. For the rest of the house, I could send it you in this letter, as easily as the drawing, only that I should have nowhere to live till the return of the post. The Chinese summer-house, which you may distinguish in the distant landscape, belongs to my Lord Radnor.* We pique ourselves upon nothing but simplicity, and have no carvings, gildings, paintings, inlayings, or tawdry businesses." †

Strawberry Hill in its new form soon became the marvel of the neighbourhood—a little later became

* J. C. Brooke, *Somerset Herald*, writes to Mr. Gough, June 21, 1680 :—"John Robartes, the last Earl of Radnor, died at Twickenham, July 15, 1757, æt. 71, S.P., and the title became extinct. He left a considerable part of his fortune, and his fine seat and furniture at Twickenham, to John Atherton Hindly, his steward, who having imprudently engaged himself in large sums of money with one Ca—r, an East India Captain, hath thereby ruined himself, and his seat at Twickenham, pictures, &c., are now upon sale; but the ancient Robartes' estate, in Cornwall, went to Mary Vere, sister and heir of Henry, Earl of Radnor, who married Thomas Hunt, of Mollington, in Cheshire, Esq., Feb. 4, 1720, and died Oct. 23, 1758, leaving George Hunt, now of Lanbydroch, and Member for Bodmyn, her eldest son and heir; and Thomas of Mollington, by purchase from his brother who is married to a co-heir of the family of Bold of Bold, co. Lancaster. The said George is seised of the remains of the Radnor estate, in Cornwall." "Nichols' Illustrations of Literary History of 18th Century." Vol. vi. p. 396.

† "Walpole Letters." Vol. iii. p. 3.

the town talk—in a short time a theme of frequent comment even in distant parts of the country. That poems should be written about it is not at all strange, but that the dwelling of a Walpole should be sung in verse by a Pulteney, shows indeed how singularly the "whirligig of Time brings about its revenges." The muse of the once hostile Earl of Bath thus sought to glorify the son of the Walpole he had threatened with destruction.

THE EARL OF BATH IN PRAISE OF STRAWBERRY HILL.

"Some talk of Gunnersbury,
For Sion some declare,
And some say that with Chiswick House
No villa can compare;
But all the beaux of Middlesex,
Who know the country well,
Say that Strawberry Hill, that Strawberry,
Doth bear away the bell.

Though Surry boasts its Oatlands,
And Claremont keeps so jim,
And though they talk of Southcote's,
'Tis but a dainty whim;
For ask the gallant Bristow,
Who does in taste excel,
If Strawberry Hill, if Strawberry
Don't bear away the bell.

Though "the Castle" excited such high commendation, it was far from finished. A "Strawberry" Committee of taste, comprising three individuals of great reputation in such matters, sat within its walls devising alterations and additions. At the head of this triumvirate was George Selwyn, an authority then not to be

disputed in the united kingdom of wit and fashion: next to him was George James Williams, perhaps not quite so celebrated as his famous colleague, nevertheless, indisputably a gentleman of "the first house," and of the finest judgment: lastly, there was Richard Lord Edgecumbe, a young nobleman, who gave the world many proofs of enlightened and cultivated taste. What was accomplished under this threefold superintendence excited the admiration of thousands of their countrymen, and the delighted lord of the mansion they helped to adorn entertained so high a sense of their services, that he employed the genius of Sir Joshua Reynolds to furnish him with a memorial of his obligation. That great artist painted a group of this friendly committee, which was suspended in the most conspicuous place in the building, and was considered one of the finest pictures in his collection.

The fame of the new castle had already gone abroad, and numberless tales were in circulation, respecting the wonders that the amateur architect had achieved. It had numerous witnesses; some contented themselves with what they could see from the road or the river, but many were eager for a nearer acquaintance. Of the great people who sought admission into its walls among the first was the hero of Culloden, who expressed himself highly gratified both with the building and its decorations.

Mr. Bentley's artistical services not being sufficient to supply the demands made upon them, in the summer of 1775, Walpole engaged a German artist, named

Muntz, for the purpose of assisting in the decorations of Strawberry Hill. At first Mr. Walpole was not quite satisfied with this addition to his household,* but he was soon not only reconciled to him, but much gratified with the evidences of talent and taste Mr. Muntz continually displayed.

On July 5, Walpole writes to Mr. Bentley :—

"Hitherto he answers all you promised and named for him: he is very modest, humble, and reasonable; and has seen so much, and knows so much of countries and languages that I am not likely to be soon tired of him. His drawings are very pretty; he has done two views of Strawberry that please me extremely; his landscape and trees are much better than I expected."†

Mr. Muntz was constantly employed, and his talents, which appear to have been considerable, were in requisition in a variety of ways. His usefulness and his obliging disposition, made him a great favourite. In August his employer writes, "I do assure you that I like both his painting and behaviour."‡ Unfortunately this good understanding did not endure. No fault could be found with the artist's painting, though he employed his artistic skill for Walpole, for more than four years, in which time he designed a great number of pictures; they did however quarrel at last, as we shall show in a future page.

To a celebrated show-place in his neighbourhood, Walpole thus alludes,

"I must tell you a private woe that has happened to me in my

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* "Walpole Letters." Vol. iii. p. 119.

† Ibid. Vol. iii. p. 126.

‡ Ibid. Vol. iii. p. 137.

neighbourhood. Sir William Stanhope bought Pope's house and garden. The former was so small and bad, one could not avoid pardoning his hollowing out that fragment of the rock Parnassus into habitable chambers; but, would you believe it, he has cut down the sacred groves themselves! It short, it was a little bit of ground of five acres inclosed with three lanes, and seeing nothing. Pope had twisted and twirled, and rhymed, and harmonized this, till it appeared two or three sweet little lawns opening and opening beyond another, and the whole surrounded with thick impenetrable woods. Sir William, by advice of his son-in-law Mr. Ellis, has hacked and hewed these groves, wriggled a winding gravel walk through them, with a hedging of shrubs, in what they call the modern taste, and in short, has desired the three lanes to walk in again; and now is forced to shut them out again by a wall, for there was not a muse could walk there but she was spied by every country fellow that went by with a pipe in his mouth."*

Greater changes have taken place since this was written; Pope's Villa saw many masters, and suffered more or less by their several humours. It has been at last pulled down, and the site made available for a group of villa residences.

The tide of fashionable emigration was now setting strongly in the direction of the new gothic castle; for to be near Strawberry Hill was considered to be in what auctioneers would distinguish as "a most desirable neighbourhood." Modest, unpretending Twickenham was, in the summer of 1755, in prodigious favour.

"Nothing is equal to the fashion of this village," writes Walpole, exultingly. "Mr. Muntz says we have more coaches than there are in half France. Mr. Pritchard has bought Ragman's Castle, for which my Lord Litchfield could not agree. We shall

* "Walpole Letters." Vol. iv. p. 63.

be as celebrated as Baiæ or Tivoli; and if we have not such sonorous names as they boast, we have very famous people. Clive and Pritchard, actresses; Scott and Hudson, painters; my Lady Suffolk, famous in her time; Mr. H——, the impudent lawyer that Tom Hervey wrote against; Whitehead, the poet; and Cambridge, the everything."*

Two clever actresses formed a great addition to the society of the place, if they added nothing to its respectability; both had enjoyed a certain degree of fashion, and had mixed much with the world. To those who loved gossip they must have been extremely welcome, and no one loved it better than did the Lord of Strawberry Hill. Kitty Clive and he were soon on excellent terms. She afforded him a fund of amusing anecdotes, which he drew upon for many a subsequent year. He frequently in his correspondence alludes to her and her brother Mr. Rafter, both of whom were constant visitors at his mansion.

But his great acquisition was the Countess of Suffolk. The small talk of green-rooms, the rivalries and triumph of the mimic stage, could be nothing to him in comparison with the scandal of Courts—with the revelations of a woman who remembered the mother of George I, and had been the favourite of George II. The reminiscences of the Mrs. Howard, who had figured so prominently at St. James's as Bedchamber Woman, and subsequently as Mistress of the Robes to Queen Caroline, made the gossiping of Lady Suffolk invalu-

* "Walpole Letters." Vol. iii. p. 128.

able. Nothing could be more convenient than the contiguity of her residence, Marble Hill, to Strawberry Hill; nothing more agreeable than the politeness of the lady in affording her experience to the son of the man of whose enemies she had more than once been the secret partizan. Lady Suffolk was now a model of propriety, estimable in all the relations of private life, and conducted herself with such prudence and sagacity, as to render her biographer excessively indignant that her friend should, in his writings, have thrown a doubt on the propriety of her previous career;* but to this, we have only to say that, if he had not any direct testimony from herself as to her assumed intimacy with George II, which is by no means improbable, his father was in a position at the time, to have known the exact state of the case, and no doubt informed his son.†

A wealthy bachelor, surrounded by so many luxuries, and so much the object of comment in the neighbourhood, could scarcely escape being rallied by his male friends on his solitary position; neither could he escape the sympathy of such of his female friends as were in similar circumstances. Among the latter, it appears, that he had a neighbour who was particularly desirous of winning him to matrimony. Her daughter frequently figures in his

* "Suffolk Correspondence."

† Lord Hervey's "Memoirs" sets this question completely at rest.

correspondence, but there is no evidence that he was in any way attached to the elder lady. In one of his letters, he mentions—

"Miss Pitt, of Twickenham, daughter of that strange woman who had a mind to be my wife, and who sent Mr. Rafter to know why I did not marry her. I replied, 'Because I was not sure that the two husbands that she had at once were both dead.' *Apropos* to my wedding, Prince Edward asked me at the opera, t'other night, when I was to marry Lady Mary Coke; I answered, as soon as I got a regiment, which you know, is now the fashionable way."*

Mrs. Pitt was no bigamist; the accusation was a retort to a very respectable elderly lady, who had playfully provoked the wit to utter this extravagance. Walpole, however, was not a marrying man. He entertained no slight respect for the sex, and put forth some pretensions to gallantry; but it was far more passive than active. It has been said that he entertained an attachment to one of Lady Pomfret's daughters; but there are no reasons for believing that either himself or the young lady was seriously enamoured. It was, at most, but a flirtation: he had had a dozen such that were much more likely to have been permanent.

We are assured by him, that he was regular in his attendance, both upon Mrs. Clive and Lady Suffolk,† and there is reason for believing that he was equally indebted to them for those political and social revelations, that form the chief attraction of

* "Walpole Letters." Vol. iv. p. 8.

† Ibid. Vol. iv. p. 152.

his Memoirs and Correspondence: it is very clear he took unquestioned all they were willing to communicate, and retailed it to the public with the fullest impression that he was publishing incontrovertible facts.

His architectural reputation, having no other foundation than the Castle at Strawberry Hill, scarcely lasted his existence: the frail elements of which the structure was composed—its aggregate of the little, the pretty, and the grotesque, caused it to be regarded rather as a toy than a building, as soon as the true character of the gothic style, of which it affected to be a representation, began to be understood in this country. But it should be said in excuse for the architect, that his circumstances did not allow of his indulging in castle-building, with any more substantial materials than lath and plaster; and his desire to make the most of his space caused him to put together a collection of small and incommodious chambers, rather than a few handsome apartments.

Walpole, however, knew at that time as much more about gothic architecture than his contemporaries—as amateur builders of the present day know more than he did—so little were the resources of this species of architecture understood when he began to build: if he did no more by his experiment, at least this credit is due to him, that he "led the professor of architecture to study with accuracy the principles of the art, which has occasioned the

restoration and preservation in such an admirable manner of so many of our finest cathedrals, colleges, and ancient gothic and conventual buildings."*

Walpole had other pursuits, let it be remembered, besides constructing a gothic habitation, and gossiping with his fair neighbours. His literary tastes, for the cultivation of which he had sought country retirement, were put into requisition as soon as he could find leisure to attend to them; and the habits of an amateur author soon began to take the place of those of an amateur architect.

* Lord Dover's preface to the Letters of Walpole to Sir Horace Mann 1833.

CHAPTER II.

THE MINOR WALPOLES.

After the death of Lord Orford, his brother Horace remained for some time in retirement at Wolterton, but though not in the enjoyment of office, he was anxiously alive to the critical state of the country, and as has been before-mentioned, watched the progress of the rebellion of 1745, with interest equal to his loyalty. The curious change of Ministry that took place at the commencement of the following year, and lasted exactly forty hours, induced him to come forward with the object of relieving the embarrassment of the King, by recommending the employment of one of the ablest men in Parliament, William Pitt. Unfortunately, however, George II had contracted what appeared to be an insurmountable prejudice against Mr. Pitt in consequence of his connection with the Prince of Wales. The Pelham Ministry were anxious to obtain his assistance, knowing by what a powerful party he was supported, but the Earls of Bath and Granville, to whom the King had

applied to rid him of the Pelhams, because they had shown themselves averse to his continental policy, objected to the admission of Pitt to the Ministry. The Pelhams resigned, but as the country had no confidence in the two Earls, they found it impossible to carry on the Government, and the Pelhams were the next day restored to power, not however without the King having expressed his sense of the hardship of being again forced to employ the Duke of Newcastle in his service: pronouncing his Grace unfit to fill the post of Chamberlain in any of the petty courts of Germany.

"Uncle Horace" had during the struggle, sent to the King a memorial, advising his sovereign "to take a certain person into a certain place" as the only measure likely to lead to the carrying on effectually the business of the State—especially with reference to foreign affairs. After expressing his reasons why this measure would be so advantageous, he says,

"These are the sentiments of a person ever unvariably attached to his Majesty's Goverment, for the sake of his country; and to his person out of duty and gratitude for his Majesty's infinite goodness to himself and family, that has no particular confidence or connection with any person now living, who neither wants nor desires more than what he has, and consequently can have no bias or views but what long experience, and knowledge of persons and parliaments have suggested to him, for his Majesty's service."*

The individual so objectionable to George II, became the chief support of the throne of George III.

* "Walpole Papers." Coxe. "Memoirs of Lord Walpole." Page 300.

He was the only Statesman of that day worthy to fill the place of Lord Orford. He had, it may be remembered, originally come into notice as Walpole's opponent, but eventually owed his ministerial appointment to the Walpole interest. Mr. Pitt's first office was that of Vice-Treasurer of Ireland, but, on the death of Mr. Winnington, he became Paymaster of the Forces. When first proposed to the King by the Duke of Newcastle, it was to fill the post of Secretary-at-War, the office in which Sir Robert Walpole had first exhibited those great abilities which ultimately led him to the most important offices of the State.

Pitt also found it an admirable school of political instruction, wherein he qualified himself for the highest posts in the kingdom. Both Ministers were singularly gifted as Statesmen; abounding in resources, fertile in expedients, and both for a long period enjoyed an extraordinary share of the public confidence and consideration. Each was ennobled by a grateful sovereign, as a reward for a lengthened course of arduous service. The Earldom of Chatham was however a more popular promotion than that of Orford, although there were not wanting in both instances persons to take exception to the distinction.

The elder Walpole was in frequent communication with Mr. Pelham, who acquainted him with the divisions that had already began to show themselves in the new cabinet. The latter in a letter, dated June 12th, 1746, after describing the unfavourable state of our affairs in Holland, adds

"Thus things stand, my dear Horace, abroad, and if I were to write an hour, and rack my brain to the utmost, I could not say one word that would recompense this ill news, by anything I can observe at home. I heartily wish you all happiness where you are; nothing but a total destruction can disturb that; but we that are rowers in the ship cannot expect that quiet. We must pray for better times: though we cannot expect those prayers will be heard; for in truth we don't deserve them."*

The writer, when concluding another letter, says:

"I know your discretion too well to think myself in any danger of having discovered what I write to you. I own I am full of the public at present; I know you are always so: to whom, therefore, can one unburthen so properly, as to one whose experience will enable him to make proper reflections: whose zeal for the public entitles him to know its concerns, and whose friendship will prompt him to excuse errors, and cover those weaknesses which, I am sensible, I too often fall into, for want of the assistance of those, on whose judgment and integrity I have all my life depended."†

The fact was, Mr. Pelham was not the Minister for such a crisis, and he knew it. The "judgment" of Sir Robert Walpole, of which he had often availed himself, was no longer within reach, and though his surviving brother afforded him a good deal of excellent advice, it was not to be so relied on as the assistance upon which he acknowledges he had depended all his life.

The effect produced by the elder Horace's "Memorial," induced him to try his hand again in communicating with royalty, and on the 19th of January 1746-7, we find him communicating with George II,

* "Coxe. "Memoirs of Lord Walpole." Page 307.
† Ibid. p. 308.

on the affairs of Spain, and advocating a better understanding between the two countries. To this his Majesty replied :—

"I thank you for your intelligence. It would be a very desirable thing, if it could be brought about: but there are hitherto too many insurmountable difficulties for it, You may easily imagine that it is of such an importance, that no time will be lost to come to a conclusion, whenever those can be removed."*

Assured that his communications were not thrown away, Mr. Walpole forwarded another still longer elucidation of the same subject. Upon which the King replied, "I thank you for the information you have given me, and if opportunity offer, you may depend on my improving it." A treaty with Prussia was, however, Walpole's favourite theme: this measure he did not venture directly to suggest to George II, who entertained a particular aversion to the existing ruler of that kingdom, but he contrived that some of his numerous communications to the principal Minister should be laid before his Majesty.

Mr. Pelham, on hearing one of these communications read, said :—

"I have the good fortune to agree with you in most of your observations on the present state of affairs abroad; and have so far benefitted of your good advice, as to make use of your ideas in a, *certain* place. When I state them, they are not objected to; but in the progress, I soon find that there is a secret view behind, that overrules all plain reasonings that can be offered."

The King's Hanoverian predilections, and dislike to the King of Prussia overruled everything in the

* Coxe. "Lord Walpole." Page 319.

shape of reason; but reason in the hands of the Pelhams was not likely to assume a very convincing form: indeed, in a short time afterwards, the Duke of Newcastle, as we have elsewhere stated, led away by his ambitious desire of becoming the first minister of the King, entirely came round to "the secret view behind," and echoed the royal opinions on foreign affairs with as much earnestness as if satisfied respecting their undeniable truth. By such conduct he ingratiated himself with a sovereign who had long been personally averse to him, and began to enjoy that supremacy in the cabinet which he fancied he was born to exercise.

As nothing resulted from Mr. Walpole's communications with the King, he thought of seeking another royal correspondent in the Duke of Cumberland, but although he took a great deal of trouble to enlighten the Duke by his own views of foreign policy, his Royal Highness would not be illumined. A second letter equally clear in its views, was then dispatched. After styling the Duke the greatest hero of his time, and exhorting him to make a peace, he adds :—

"You have, sir, the heart of your royal father, and next to him of the people. His glory and future tranquillity, their safety and happiness depend upon you; exert your superior genius, and act as the chief Minister of his counsels in the Cabinet, as you have been at the head of his armies in the field."

But the Duke's superior genius was not exerted: and a third letter, with other arguments to the same effect proceeded from the same source. Nothing came

of it. The persevering statesman followed this up with an interview with his Royal Highness, which he styles "a conference." It took place December 20, 1747. Then he once more reiterated his views of foreign policy, his confidence in Prussia, and his reasons for a peace. Unfortunately, Mr. Walpole's arguments were not more successful in conversation than they had been on paper, but even this did not dishearten this zealous politician.

He now sought to sway the Duke of Newcastle by the reasoning that had failed in other quarters, and although nothing could look more unpromising at first, he succeeded in teasing the Minister into a serious consideration of the subject. The Cabinet at last came into his pacific views, and by their interposition, the preliminaries of peace were signed between Great Britain, France, and the United Provinces on the 30th of April. Mr. Walpole's services were required during the negotiations in consequence of his having pointed out to the Ministry an important omission in the copy of the preliminaries: this incident also gave rise to his publication of a pamphlet* which once more advocated his views of foreign policy, and that with a degree of talent which was acknowledged by many of the leading men of the period.

In 1748, Mr. Horace Walpole, senior, formed an alliance with the family of William, third Duke of Devonshire, whose daughter Rachel was married to

* "A Rhapsody on Foreign Politics,"

his eldest son; an union from which he derived more satisfaction than from his political exertions.

"My good offices can be of no use anywhere; the freedom which my conscience, and concern for my King and country, lately obliged me to take, and which I have the vanity to think was of some service, will never be forgiven: and therefore, although I was very importunate, and am thought by some of the greatest, to have been very impertinent, to put an end to a war which threatened a general destruction, I cannot repent of what I did, but I am resolved to enjoy the peace with great calm and contentedness, without giving myself, or anybody else, any trouble upon Ministerial conduct, being at last convinced that nobody takes advice until he gives it to himself; and in all stations of life.

"'Obsequium amicos, veritas odium parit.'"

A very proper sentiment for a diplomatist who found himself shelved.

The neglect he had experienced did not cause him to withdraw from politics. In the session of 1749, he made several speeches; in particular, one, on a message from the King recommending the payment of 100,000*l.* to the Empress of Austria, being the fourth of a sum granted to her by a treaty entered into the preceding year; which was decidedly against the grant. The opinions he then expressed, he had previously embodied in a pamphlet* which had obtained the approval of many eminent men. Among others Bishop Secker wrote:—

"Mr. Walpole has been so kind as to make me two visits since you were in town, and hath put into my hands the papers which you intimated he would, with leave to communicate them to the

* "A Letter to a Friend who desired my thoughts upon signing the Preliminaries."

Bishop of Gloucester; and we have both of us read them with great satisfaction, and a high esteem of the abilities and spirit of the writer, who has shewn the *rightest* judgment of affairs, supported it with the clearest reason, proposed it, and pursued the proposal with the most steady resolution, and yet the greatest decency and propriety: and (which I could not help taking particular notice of) hath in several places expressed a strong sense of the superintendency of Divine Providence. On the whole I do not think any man living hath deserved so well of his country, in its late situation, as he hath; and I see that his brother deserved much better than I apprehended, though I always both thought better of him and wished better to him than some who voted constantly with him. I hope Mr. Walpole's health will long permit him to continue his attention to the public, and that the directors of the public will attend to his advice."*

The good prelate's hopes were not realized. Mr. Walpole, like many other good advisers, was most appreciated by those whose appreciation was the least available to him. The Pelham Ministry did not think of him so highly as Bishop Secker, and did not care to attend to his advice, though one or two of its members regarded him as worthy of being consulted on an emergency. Changes were occasionally made in the Ministry, but Walpole never profited by them. The Earl of Harrington was dismissed from the office of Secretary of State; but the Earl of Chesterfield was selected to fill his post. Lord Chesterfield resigned, and the Duke of Bedford succeeded him. The Duke went out and Lord Holderness came in. It seemed as though everybody could enter the Cabinet but Mr. Horace Walpole.

* Coxe. "Memoirs of Lord Walpole." Page 371.

It does not appear that he was much disconcerted at this neglect. He sometimes alluded to his unrewarded services and his want of ambition: nevertheless, he from time to time continues to instruct Mr. Pelham, and the Duke of Newcastle, and finding this tuition not sufficient for his purpose, he obtained the assistance of the Countess of Yarmouth to present another memorial to his Sovereign on the state of Foreign Affairs. As the views advocated by the writer were in direct opposition to those entertained by the King, it may readily be believed that his Majesty preferred his own, and Mr. Walpole's expositions were as entirely disregarded as though they had never been made. He composed long speeches as well as long memorials, and long pamphlets as well as long speeches; but the same fate attended them all. His parliamentary orations were heard with the same "profound silence" that attended his communications to the King, and at last his exhausted patience gave way; in a sudden fit of desperation, he determined never again to express in the House his views of Foreign Affairs.

This determination occurred about the period he discovered that his ministerial *protegé*, Mr. Pelham, not only neglected his instructions, but was indifferent to his friendship. The Minister began to be cold, reserved, and ultimately inaccessible. It was evident that he would no longer see with the Walpole spectacles, nor take his political lessons out of the Walpole primer. This arose from the

influence of the Duke of Newcastle; although Mr. Pelham was opposed in heart to some of the Duke's opinions, brotherly feeling and considerations for his party, swayed him to such an extent, that he found himself obliged to abandon the policy in which he had been so carefully instructed, and forward that to which he had expressed himself averse. The two friends in consequence became estranged. In a short time after this, Henry Pelham was removed entirely from the scene. In March, 1754, death put an end to his ministry.*

The scholar had always walked at a respectful distance from the master. Nature had not furnished Henry Pelham with the resources of a Walpole, and therefore he was not likely to throw into the shade the fame of his teacher. As a politician he possessed none of the elements of greatness—as a

* The day of Mr. Pelham's death was the day of publication of Bolingbroke's work in five volumes, edited by David Mallett. This coincidence was seized by Garrick to give point to an ode, in which is to be found the following verse:—

"The same sad morn to Church and State
(So for our sins 'twas fixed by fate)
A double shock was given.
Black as the regions of the North,
St. John's fell genius issued forth,
And Pelham's fled to Heaven."

It was in allusion to this edition of his Lordship's works that Dr. Johnson said, "Sir, he (Bolingbroke) was a scoundrel and a coward; a scoundrel for charging a blunderbuss against religion and morality; a coward because he had no resolution to fire it off himself, but left half a crown to a beggarly Scotchman to draw the trigger after his death."

statesman he did nothing to elevate himself or his country. As we have said, he belonged to the respectable order of mediocrities, temporizers, stop-gaps, experimenters, professors of expediency. Of the first object of good government, the prosperity of the governed, the race of Pelhams will always be found singularly ignorant. The people,—the living, working, thinking nation,—for whose advantage the monarchy was created—are rarely thought of, except as affording the raw material of revenue, or when considered as beasts of burthen, their powers of draught and endurance of labour become the subject of speculation.

How profound is the responsibility of an English Minister, how noble his vocation! Placed at the helm of so stupendous a vessel as the British Empire, it is not only the safety of the ship for which he has to answer, but the comfort, the welfare, the security of the crew. The Pelham administration has found an historian;* but history supplies us with a very different account of its proceedings—for it is one thing to write the memoirs of a distinguished family, and another to analyze the conduct of a public servant. The Duke of Newcastle, who had so jealously observed the honours that had been thrust upon his brother, in consequence of his late subserviency to the King, was allowed to succeed to the vacant post of First Lord of the Treasury; and the now gracious Sovereign gave the first place amongst

* Archdeacon Coxe.

his counsellors to the very man whom he had stigmatised as unfit to be Chamberlain to any of the "High Dullnesses" of the minor States of Germany.

The death of his brother must have been a great loss to the Duke of Newcastle, for notwithstanding his Grace's rivalry and jealousy, we are inclined to believe that he keenly felt such a deprivation. The object of this memoir, who was then observing narrowly every political and social movement that took place, had his eyes upon the Duke; and with no kindly feeling, on the 17th of March, 1754, thus records his Grace's behaviour, appearing at Court after his brother's funeral:—

"At the foot of the stairs he cried and sunk down; the yeomen of the guard were forced to drag him up under the arms. When the closet door opened, he flung himself at his length at the King's feet, sobbed, and cried 'God bless your Majesty; God preserve your Majesty;' and lay there howling and embracing the King's knees, with one foot so extended, that my Lord Coventry, who was *luckily* in waiting, and begged the standers by to retire with 'For God's sake, gentlemen, don't look at a great man in distress,' endeavouring to shut the door, caught his Grace's foot, and made him roar with pain."*

This description is, doubtless, exaggerated; but in other places the younger Horace is at no pains to conceal his contempt for both brothers.

"I expected that we should have been overrun with elegies and panegyrics; indeed, I comforted myself that one word in all of them would atone for the rest—the *late* Mr. Pelham. But the world seems to allow that their universal attachment and submission

* "Walpole Letters." Vol. iii. p. 46.

was universal interestedness: there has not been published a single encomium."*

Brighter stars now begin to appear above the horizon. The names of Fox and Pitt—the representatives of the parliamentary Guelphs and Ghibellines—who were destined to fill the political world with division, soon paled "the ineffectual fires" of the Pelhams. Both might be considered disciples of Walpole, though with a difference. Fox had been devoted to him, and had served in his ministry: Pitt, on the contrary, had early distinguished himself by his opposition; yet the admirable lessons which the great statesman has furnished to the parliamentary scholar, were well studied by both. They were men of too much talent and influence to be neglected by the Duke of Newcastle: he courted them both and feared them both: he gave each to understand that he was anxious to obtain him as a coadjutor, yet was so fearful of their rivalry, that he would only appoint to the principal posts men of abilities as moderate as his own. The two great orators not approving of this arrangement, joined their forces for an attack upon their jealous leader; and the latter looked about him to gather all available support against the coming struggle.

Once more old Horace Walpole was courted, flattered, and consulted. He was again the Pelham oracle. He was again the ministerial adviser, counsellor, and confidential friend. He wrote letters

* "Walpole Letters." Vol. iii. p. 47.

of instructions, and drew up papers of suggestions, with re-awakened zeal. The Duke read and listened with the greatest attention—the Duke was struck with the profoundness of his views—the Duke professed the most perfect concurrence in the truth of his remarks—and the Duke then went and persuaded his colleagues to do exactly the reverse of that which Walpole had advised.

Mr. Walpole found time for other employments. Having furnished hints to the Crown, and instructions to the Ministry, he sought to vary his labours by an inquiry into the demerits of one of his brother's most distinguished assailants. Lord Bolingbroke had been dead since 1751, but David Mallet, or Malloch, an obscure book-maker, having brought out a splendid edition of his Lordship's works in five quarto volumes, the elder Horace, who shared in the family aversion to this talented yet reckless politician, determined as he informs a friend "to unmask that wicked impostor Bolingbroke, whose villanous ministry and measures have been the source from whence all the difficulties, debts, and distresses that have embarrassed this nation, both in domestic and foreign concerns, ever since the peace of Utrecht, have directly flowed."

Among Bolingbroke's collected works are his celebrated Letters on the Study of History, and these appear to have excited Mr. Walpole's extreme indignation. He sat down to examine them :—

"I have at leisure hours," he informs us, "taken the works of

that *charlatan* into my hands, and find the notoriety of the falsehoods advanced in almost every page, makes the difficulty of an answer; for instead of stating known propositions and facts, and making the proper inferences and true conclusions from them, his affirmation of things that never existed are strong and positive, and are incoherently scattered up and down his books, with interludes of amusing anecdotes and embellishments, nothing to the purpose, to divert the reader from further enquiry, taking it for granted that such impudent assertions must have some foundation in truth, which makes it hard to collect them into a body, and by taking them to pieces afterwards, to expose the variety of falsehoods, stripped of artificial ornaments, in their natural and hideous deformity; but perhaps something may be attempted."

Something was attempted. Mr. Walpole commenced a sort of answer to Bolingbroke in three parts; the first and second, which carries the narrative to the dismission of the Duke of Marlborough, in 1711, he completed; the third, that was to have concluded with the peace of Utrecht, he left unfinished. The earlier portion was shown to Hering, Archbishop of York, and Viscount Barrington, among several other distinguished members of the old Walpole party, who have all left on record their high opinion of its merit. The Archbishop hoped the work might see the light, "that the wretched man may be detected in his politics as well as his religion, that he may not delude the world in either;" and Lord Barrington declared that the author had detected the fallacies and fictions of Lord Bolingbroke in a manner that admitted neither of doubt nor reply.

In the year 1755, the Duke of Newcastle still continued awkwardly trying to cajole the two able

men he was afraid to offend, and yet was still more afraid to employ; but at last he succeeded in making up his mind to the unavoidable necessity of disarming their opposition by securing their services. He had intended that Fox should be at the head of the Treasury, and Pitt Secretary of State, but the latter would not sanction such an arrangement, as it placed him in a position inferior to that of his rival.

Mr. Walpole, who had not been in the slightest degree disturbed by the little success attending his various communications to the Government, never heard of a difficulty but he came forward to point out the proper way of removing it. The Duke's embarrassment regarding the two great orators moved his compassion, and he volunteered to effect a reconciliation. The Duke gladly accepted his services, and Pitt quite as gladly listened to such a negotiator. The great statesman was not implacable: he suffered himself to be won over by a promise of a post in the Cabinet, and the seals of Secretary of State on the first vacancy. Walpole returned to the Duke full of triumph, anticipating his warmest thanks; but instead, he chose to affect a monstrous indignation with his negotiator, declaring he had exceeded his instructions. Pitt, consequently, became more estranged than ever, and expressed a vast deal of contempt for the Duke of Newcastle. He made a combination of the Tories and the followers of the Prince of Wales, with which he threatened determined opposition to the measures of the Government.

Mr. Walpole was so disconcerted with the result of his last negotiation that he returned to Wolterton, and resumed his literary occupations, acknowledging himself "ignorant and useless," and having no curiosity for public affairs. Nevertheless, in September of the same year we find him writing to Lord Chancellor Hardwicke, to remonstrate respecting a treaty that engaged England to provide troops for the Court of Russia. As he particularly desired, this note was shown to the King, who sent him a kind message. This was quite enough encouragement to induce Mr. Walpole to address the Chancellor on the same subject more at length—not forgetting to express his gratification at his Majesty's remembrance. He then left Wolterton, and the reply to Lord Bolingbroke, and was scarcely arrived in town when the whole Ministry rushed towards him as to a guardian angel. The Lord Chancellor told him all that the Government had done; the Duke of Newcastle, in a conference equally long and confidential, informed him what was necessary to do; and Mr. Walpole made up his mind to support the treaty he had so recently denounced; but an alliance, that was then entered into with Prussia, rendered the treaty with Russia unnecessary.

Some changes and promotions now ensued: Fox was made Secretary of State, and Pitt was dismissed; the latter preferring to be first in opposition rather than second in office. Bubb Doddington became Treasurer of the Navy, and the Duke of Newcastle

retained his post of First Lord of the Treasury. Mr. Walpole was not employed, though he afforded important services to Government, both in this and the following sessions, but he was not suffered this time to go away entirely unrewarded. The King, who did not like his opposition to his continental policy, and the Duke of Newcastle, whose dread of his proving as formidable as his brother, had kept him in the back-ground, were agreed that he deserved a reward for his good services, and, on the 1st of June, 1756, he was created Baron Walpole, of Wolterton. Such was the recompense of fifty years' service: and it seems to have satisfied the recipient.

This was one of the last acts of the Pelham Administration, for which Lord Walpole had done so much; and, a very few months afterwards, the great man, the omnipotent Duke of Newcastle, was turned out of his post at the head of the Government to make room for William, fourth Duke of Devonshire, and Pitt superseded Fox as Secretary of State. These changes were, however, of brief duration. The Duke, in July, 1757, wriggled himself again into his post; but before this took place his old counsellor had been removed from the sphere of these incessant intrigues.

Lord Walpole had long been afflicted with the stone, and, in consonance with his desire to rush to pen and ink on every possible occasion, and make a State paper of every transaction, he wrote a long account of his case, which he forwarded to the Royal

Society, and they printed it in their "Transactions."* But neither doctors nor philosophers could be of any service to him. He lingered in great pain, and expired on the 5th of February, 1757, in his 79th year.

Thus closed the career of one who took his share in the Walpole obloquy, and gave his share to the Walpole reputation. We are not disposed to consider him a great statesman, or claim for him the consideration accorded to his more celebrated brother; but he was superior in talent to many of his contemporaries who attained a much higher eminence; and his honesty and zeal would have rendered creditable a much less amount of political accomplishments than he could boast of. Measured with the diplomatists of a more modern period, Lord Walpole will probably fall below par; but he had no genius for that fine subtlety which is now expected to pervade every important negotiation, and knew nothing of that scientific game of words, in which diplomatists of the new school are so eager to distinguish themselves.

In appearance he was more fitted to appear as a republican representative, than as an ambassador from a powerful sovereign to the most polished court in Europe; his manners were so unpolished, his form so inelegant, and his address so unrefined. He rendered valuable support to the English monarchy, and won the confidence of the shrewd and calculating Queen Caroline, as well as the esteem of the sagacious and

* See also "Gentleman's Magazine, for 1758. Page 429.

prudent States-General. A trustworthy authority has styled him "a great master of the commercial and political interests of this country,"* and accorded him the merits of unwearied zeal, industry, and capacity. With such advantages, he might well confess, without much regret, that he had never learned to dance, and could not pride himself on making a bow.

Though blunt and unpolished, he was extremely agreeable in conversation; abounding in pleasant anecdote, and entertaining reminiscences; fond of society, affable to every one, sumptuous in his hospitality, and not less estimable in his domestic than in his social relations. Though he wrote, and printed, and spoke lessons of political wisdom, that met with the fate of entire disregard, it is impossible not to admire the unselfish zeal that would almost immediately afterwards induce him to write, print, and speak similar instructive lessons, to the same set of negligent scholars.

There is a statement which having found its way into such an authority as "Chandler's Debates," has been incorporated in works pretending to historical accuracy. On a debate arising out of the Bill for the Encouragement and increase of Seamen, in 1740, Pitt is represented as attacking Mr. Horace Walpole for having ventured on a reference to his youth. The fact is, that these debates were imaginary or constructed on a very slight foundation. Dr.

* Lord Hardwicke. "State Papers." Vol. ii. p. 631.

Johnson, as is well known, before he had obtained his colossal reputation, drew up fictitious reports of what took place in the House of Commons.

Mr. Walpole having in a discussion been severely handled by Pitt, Lyttelton, and the Granvilles, all of whom were much his juniors, lamented that though he had been so long in business, young men should be found so much better informed in political matters than himself. He added that he had at least one consolation in remembering that his own son being twenty years of age, must be as much the superior of Pitt, Lyttelton, and the Granvilles, as they were wiser than himself. Pitt having his youth thus mercilessly flung in his face, got up in a rage, commencing "With the greatest reverence to the grey hairs of the gentleman," but was stopped by Mr. Walpole pulling off his wig, and disclosing a grizzled poll beneath. This excited very general laughter, in which Pitt joined with such heartiness as quite to forget his anger.

There does not appear to have been any great degree of affection existing between Horace Walpole the younger and some of his nearest kindred. In his Correspondence he rarely mentions either of his brothers, between whom and himself there was not very much communication; his elder brother's wife Margaret, Lady Walpole, does figures more prominently in his letters, but certainly not in a manner that expresses either affection or respect. To the female members of his father's family, however, he showed

more amiability. Neither his uncle nor his uncle's son excited very lively sentiments of affection; the latter being usually alluded to under the *sobriquet* "Pigwiggin;" the former is scarcely ever mentioned, except in terms extremely disrespectful.

The fact is, Horace held his uncle in particular dislike. This arose in some measure from the absence of all consideration in Lord Walpole for his nephew; his apparent subserviency to the Pelhams; and from his entering into one dispute with him respecting succession to property, and another respecting succession to an heiress. The last arose out of a transaction which attracted considerable attention at the time. The third Lord Orford being very much involved in debt, the younger Horace intended for him an heiress of 150,000*l.*, and placed the young lady, a Miss Nicholl, with the elder Horace at Wolterton, who, he expected, would assist him in the arrangement; but old Horace thought the heiress a better chance for one of his sons than for one of his nephews.

At a later period of his life, Horace put forth many accusations against his uncle; but the principal one was what he styled an act of treachery to himself, in defeating his designs on Miss Nicholl's fortune in favour of his nephew. This he mentions in a letter to Sir Horace Mann, dated May 30, 1751.

"If I could be mortified anew, I should meet with a new disappointment. The immense and uncommon friendship of Mr. Chute, had found a method of saving both my family and yours: in short,

in the height of his affection for Whithed, he undertook to get Miss Nicholl the vast fortune—a fortune of about 150,000*l.*, whom Mr. Whithed was to have had—for Lord Orford. He actually persuaded her to run away from her guardians, who used her inhumanly, and are her next heirs."

This scheme failed. Miss Nicholl's fortune which was to have paid Horace's claims, as well as those of his correspondent, on the Houghton property, escaped both, and Horace never forgave his uncle the disappointment it caused him. He even wrote a narrative of the whole affair to show him up; but afterwards thought this episode of the Walpole history had better be suppressed, and it was never published. In various places Horace is found stigmatizing his kinsman as his "monstrous uncle," "that buffoon my old uncle:" and he accuses him of having injured and betrayed him. He does not all the time seem to have the least idea of the nature of his own conduct in entering into a conspiracy to carry off a heiress; which there is no doubt was quite as much with the hope of benefitting himself, as of improving the position of his impoverished nephew.

Under the date of April 20, 1756, Horace is found giving to a confidential friend, the following intimation of this dispute with his uncle.

"By the time I hope to see you at Strawberry Hill, there will be a second volume of the "Horatiana" ready for the press, or a full and true account of the bloody civil wars of the house of Walpole, being a narrative of the unhappy differences between Horatio and Horace Walpoles; in short the old wretch who aspires to be

one of the heptarchy, and who I think will live as long as old Mr. Lowther, has accomplished such a series of abominable avarice and dirt, that I, notwithstanding my desire to veil the miscarriages of my race, have been obliged to drag him and all his doings into light."*

And again in the first month of the following year, there occurs a still less respectful allusion to him.

"My uncle is grown something between childish and mad, and raves about the melancholy situation of politics; one would think he did not much despair of his country, when at seventy-eight he could practise such dirty arts to intercept his brother's estate from his brother's grandchildren."†

The eldest of Horace Walpole's brothers, Robert, Lord Walpole, succeeded his father as second Earl of Orford, and died in 1751. He was succeeded in the title by his only son George, to whom his uncle Horace is sometimes found referring with something like regard.

Of this nephew Horace Walpole has also left us the following curious description.

"The only proof of fondness the Countess of Orford has ever given for her son, has been expressing great concern at his wanting taste for Greek and Latin. Indeed he has not much encouraged yearnings in her. I should have thought him shocked at the chronicle of her life, if he ever felt any impressions. But to speak freely to you, my dear sir, he is the most particular young man I ever saw. No man ever felt such a disposition to love another as I did to love him. I flattered myself that he would restore some lustre to our house; at

* "Walpole Letters." Vol. iii. p. 215.

† Ibid. Vol. iii. p. 271. Sir Horace Mann considered Lord Walpole qualified to become Prime Minister.—Ibid. Vol. iii. p. 51.

least, not let it totally sink: but I am forced to give him up, and all my Walpôle views. I will describe him to you if I can, but don't let it pass your lips. His figure is charming; he has more of the easy, genuine air of a man of quality than ever you saw: though he has a little hesitation in his speech, his address and manner are the most engaging imaginable: he has a good breeding and attention when he is with you that is even flattering; you think he not only means to please, but designs to do everything that shall please you; he promises, offers everything one can wish—but this is all; the instant he leaves you, all the world are nothing to him—he would not give himself the least trouble in the world to give any body the greatest satisfaction; yet this is mere indolence of mind, not of body—his whole pleasure is outrageous exercise. Everything he promises to please you, is to cheat the present moment and hush any complaint—I mean of words; letters he never answers, not of business, not of his own business: engagements of no sort he ever keeps. He is the most selfish man in the world without being in the least interested: he loves nobody but himself, yet neglects every view of fortune and ambition. He has not only always slighted his mother, but was scarce decent to his rich old grandmother, when she had not a year to live, and courted him to receive her favours. You will ask me what passions he has—none but of parade; he drinks without inclination—games without attention; is immeasurably obstinate, yet, like obstinate people, governed as a child. In short, it is impossible not to love him when one sees him; impossible to esteem him when one thinks on him."*

George, Earl of Orford, had, it appears, a fine figure, and attracted a good deal of admiration, particularly when he appeared in public at the head of the Norfolk Regiment of Militia, of which he was the Colonel. Alluding to this, Pitt writes to Lady Hester:—

* "Walpole Letters." Vol. iii. p. 123.

"Nothing could make a better appearance than the two Norfolk battalions. Lord Orford with the front of Mars himself, and really the genteelest figure under arms I ever saw, was the theme of every tongue.*

"The crowds in Hyde Park, when the King reviewed them," says Horace Walpole, "were unimaginable. My Lord Orford, their Colonel, I hear, looked gloriously martial and genteel, and I believe it; his person and air have a noble wildness in them; the regiments, too, are very becoming—scarlet, faced with black, buff waistcoats, and gold buttons. How knights of shires, who have never shot anything but woodcocks, like this warfare, I don't know; but the towns through which they pass adore them; everywhere they are treated and regaled. The Prince of Wales followed them to Kingston, and gave fifty guineas among the private men."†

The third Lord Orford was not fated to increase the reputation of the family; he found himself on coming to the estate, overwhelmed with the obligations of his father and grandfather; but instead of seeking emancipation from this in some honourable manner, he devoted himself to the turf, and added to his embarrassments by engaging in bets like the following:

"Oct. 17, 1756.—My Lord Rockingham and my nephew, Lord Orford, have made a match of five hundred pounds, between five turkeys and five geese to run from Norwich to London."‡

Lord Orford exhibited evident symptoms of insanity, which although only occurring at intervals caused his family great distress, and was in particular

* "Chatham Correspondence." Vol. ii. p. 4.
† "Walpole Letters." Vol. iii, p. 463.
‡ "Ibid." Vol. iii. p. 246.

a source of deep trouble and anxiety to his uncle Horace, who was consequently obliged to visit Houghton, and look after his unhappy nephew's affairs. On one occasion of this kind, he thus records his feelings on paying his first visit to the family mansion since the death of his father.

HORACE WALPOLE TO GEORGE MONTAGUE, ESQ.

"Houghton, March, 25th, 1761.

"Here I am again at Houghton! and alone: in this spot, where (except two hours last month) I have not been in sixteen years. Think what a crowd of reflections! No; Gray, and forty churchyards could not furnish so many! nay I know one must feel them with greater indifference than I possess, to have patience to put them into verse. Here I am probably for the last time of my life, though not for the last time; every clock that strikes, tells me I am an hour nearer to yonder church,—that church into which I have not yet had courage to enter; where lies that mother on whom I doated, and who doated on me! There are the two rival mistresses of Houghton, neither of whom ever wished to enjoy it. There too is he who founded its greatness; to contribute to whose fall Europe was embroiled; there he sleeps in quiet and dignity, while his friend and his foe, rather his false ally and real enemy, Newcastle and Bath, are exhausting the dregs of their pitiful lives in squabbles and pamphlets.

"The surprise the pictures gave me is again renewed; accustomed for many years to see nothing but wretched daubs and varnished copies at auctions, I look at these as enchantment. My own description of them seems poor; but shall I tell you truly, the majesty of Italian ideas almost sinks before the warm nature of Flemish colouring. Alas, don't I grow old? My young imagination was fired with Guido's ideas; must they be plump and prominent as Abishag to warm me now? Doth great youth feel with poetic limbs, as well as see with poetic eyes? In one respect I am very young, I cannot satiate myself with looking; an incident con-

tributed to make me feel this more strongly. A party arrived just as I did, to see the house—a man and three women in riding dresses, and they rode post through the apartments: I could not hurry before them fast enough; they were not so long in seeing for the first time as I could have been in one room, to examine what I knew by heart. I remember formerly being often diverted with this kind of *seers:* they come, ask what such a room is called, in which Sir Robert lay, write it down, admire a lobster, or a cabbage in a market piece, dispute whether the last room was green or purple and then hurry to the inn, for fear the fish should be overdressed. How different my sensations; not a picture here but recalls a history; not one but I remember in Downing Street or Chelsea, where Queens and crowds admired them, though seeing them as little as these travellers.

"When I had drank tea, I strolled into the garden; they told me it was now called a *pleasure ground.* What a dissonant idea of pleasure—those groves, those *allées,* where I have passed so many charming moments, were now stripped up or overgrown—many fond paths I could not unravel, though with a very exact clue in my memory. I met two gamekeepers and a thousand hares! In the days when all my soul was tuned to pleasure and vivacity (and you will think perhaps, it is far from being out of tune yet) I hated Houghton and its solitude; yet I loved this garden as now, with many regrets, I love Houghton—Houghton, I know not what to call it—a monument of grandeur or ruin! How I have wished this evening for Lord Bute. How I could preach to him. For myself I do not want to be preached to; I have long considered, how every Balbec must wait for the chance of a Mr. Wood. The servants wanted to lay me in the great apartment—what, to make me pass my night as I have done my evening! It were like proposing to Margaret Roper to be a Duchess in the Court that cut off her father's head, and imagine it would please her. I have chosen to sit in my father's little dressing-room, and am now by his scrutoire, where, in the height of his fortune, he used to receive the accounts of his farmers, and deceive himself or us, with the thoughts of his economy. How wise a man, at once, and how weak. For what has he built

Houghton? For his grandson to annihilate, or for his son to mourn over. If Lord Burleigh could rise and view his representative driving the Hatfield stage, he would feel as I feel now. Poor little Strawberry, at least it will not be stripped to pieces by a descendant."*

"You will find all these fine meditations dictated by pride, not by philosophy. Pray consider though, how many mediums philosophy must pass before it is purified—how often must it weep, often burn!"†

The Lord of Houghton seemed quite as regardless of the honour of his House in his sane, as in his insane intervals, and in a subsequent visit his uncle thus describes the melancholy state of things at Houghton.

"I returned last night from Houghton, where a multiplicity of business detained me four days longer than I intended, and where I found a scene infinitely more mortifying than I expected, though I certainly did not go with a prospect of finding a land flowing with milk and honey. Except the pictures, which are in the finest preservation, and the woods which are become forests, all the rest is ruin, desolation, confusion, disorder, debts, mortgages, sales, pillage, villainy, waste, folly, and madness. I do not believe that five thousand pounds would put the house and buildings into good repair. The nettles and brambles in the park are up to your shoulders; horses have been turned into the garden, and banditti lodged in every cottage. The perpetuity of livings that come up to the park pales have been sold, and every farm let for half its value. In short, you know how much family pride I have, and consequently may judge how much I have been mortified. Nor do

* Unfortunately, "poor little Strawberry," had exactly this fate.

† "Walpole Letters." Vol. iv. p. 129.

I tell you half, or *near* the worst circumstances. I have just stopped the torrent, and that is all. I am very uncertain whether I must not fling up the trust; and some of the difficulties in my way seem insurmountable, and too dangerous not to alarm even my zeal; since I must not ruin myself, and hurt those for whom I must feel too, only to restore a family that will end with myself, and to retrieve an estate from which I am not likely ever to receive the least advantage."*

The noble gallery of paintings was now offered for sale, in the hope of averting the ruin impending over the possessor: after some negotiations they were sold to the empress of Russia for 40,000*l.*, and are now, as was before-mentioned, the chief ornament of the Hermitage Palace at St. Petersburgh.

Sir Robert Walpole's second son Edward, as usual, concluded his education with a tour. His appearance was so much in his favour, that the Italian ladies gave him the name of "the handsome Englishman." On his return to England in 1730, he lodged at the bottom of Pall Mall, in a house, the lower part of which, was occupied by a man of the name of Rennie, who made children's coats. When passing through the shop, one of the apprentices frequently attracted Walpole's notice; she was a beautiful young woman of the name of Mary Clement, whose family though too poor to give her any education, were extremely desirous that she should maintain an honest reputation. Mr. Walpole soon contrived to have frequent interviews with her, and

* Ibid. Vol. v. p. 349.

gave her many little presents; but not so secretly as to escape the notice of her mistress, who sent for her father to take her away from temptation into the country: together they lectured her upon the impropriety of receiving attentions from a gentleman, and endeavoured to convince her how much more it would be to her advantage, to become the wife of a respectable tradesman.

These representations appeared to produce due effect, and the girl left the room apparently to prepare for her departure; after some time her mistress and her father, were surprised that she did not return; —but to them she never returned. On leaving the room where she had been forced to listen to their remonstrances, she had rushed to the apartments of "the handsome Englishman," and when he received her with open arms, she vowed that she would never leave him;—nor did she. Mr. Walpole was devoted to her, befriended all her family, and treated her with respect and consideration, though he never married her. It is to be hoped, however, that he only waited for his father's death to give the woman who had thus thrown herself upon his honour the position to which her unblemished reputation had entitled her.

She bore him four children, and every attention was paid by the father to their nurture and education. As children they were remarkably handsome, like their parents. There were three girls, who as they

grew up towards womanhood, threatened to eclipse the renown of the beautiful Gunnings, after whom all England from John o' Groats to the Land's End, had become frantic. The fourth child was a boy, and shortly after his birth, the poor erring, devoted Mary Clement died. Deep was the grief of the father of her children, and he mourned her loss as a fond husband mourns the deprivation of the best of wives.

Mr. Edward Walpole, was now a member of Parliament, and held more than one lucrative appointment under the Crown. His position would have entitled him to marry into any of the first families of the Kingdom; but he never would think of marriage—he could think only of his children, and if he entertained any desire to elevate himself, it was with the desire of elevating them. He was installed a Knight of the Bath in 1753, and when the Duke of Devonshire became Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Sir Edward was appointed Chief Secretary, and sworn of the Privy Council. He subsequently became joint secretary of the Treasury.

The three daughters of Sir Edward Walpole, Laura, Maria, and Charlotte, excited the admiration of every one who had the happiness of enjoying their society. They were among the chief beauties of their time,* and having become as accomplished as they

* The portraits of Laura and Charlotte were painted together by Ramsay: this picture sold at the Strawberry Hill sale for

were lovely, appeared worthy the affection of the proudest nobles in the kingdom. To this however their birth opposed what appeared to be an insurmountable bar. They could not be presented at Court, nor be recognized by those who could boast of unsullied descent.

Horace Walpole was very partial to his brother's lovely daughters—indeed, he was very proud of them, notwithstanding the bend sinister in their escutcheons. He would gladly leave any of his favourite occupations to attend upon his favourite nieces; and it was always a grand day at Strawberry Hill, when its lord welcomed the Walpole beauties within its gothic walls. But there were much younger men than their uncle, who were ready to leave their pleasantest pursuits to enjoy their charming society.

The prejudices which had hitherto kept the young ladies from matching with members of aristocratic families were gradually giving way. The first who made up his mind to set them at defiance was the Honourable and Reverend Frederick Keppel, brother to the Earl of Albemarle, who held preferment in the Church of England with an excellent prospect of further promotion. He admired Laura, the eldest of the beauties; she proved not insensible to his merits, and the Reverend Frederick soon loved, if "not wisely, yet too well" to remember the story of Mary Clement,

52*l.* 10*s.* Maria was painted by Sir Joshua Reynolds, and sold for 735*l.*

while he looked upon Mary Clement's beautiful daughter.

"I have forgot to tell you of a wedding in our family," writes Walpole; "my brother's eldest daughter is to be married to-morrow to Lord Albemarle's third brother, a canon of Windsor. We are very happy with the match. The bride is very agreeable, sensible, and good; not so handsome as her sisters, but farther from ugliness than beauty. It is the second, Maria, who is beauty itself. Her face, bloom, eyes, hair, teeth, and person are all perfect. You may imagine how charming she is when her only fault, if one must find one, is that her face is rather too round. She has a great deal of wit and vivacity, with perfect modesty."

After the marriage of Laura, Maria and Charlotte's chance of forming great alliances improved wonderfully. The sisters of the Earl of Albemarle appear to have become sisters in love as well as in law, and in their society the prejudices against the young ladies were rapidly crumbling away. They were received everywhere—Maria, the beauty of the family, creating a marked sensation wherever she appeared. One place only was closed against these unoffending girls—this was the Court of their Sovereign; the elder sister indeed was allowed the honour of a reception; but then her marriage had so qualified her. Being the wife of the Honourable and Reverend Frederick Keppel, she was, of course, no longer the daughter of poor Mary Clement. Mrs. Keppel therefore appeared at Court, and the Misses Walpole did not.

Among the numerous admirers of the belle of the

season was a peer, who though not quite young, and far from good looking, thought himself not too old nor too plain to take a wife—Maria Walpole was certainly the most lovely woman he had ever seen; but then there were "objections." His Lordship had held the respectable post of Governor and Privy Purse to his present Majesty, George III, when Prince of Wales; he was a Member of the Privy Council, a Knight of the Garter, and one of the Tellers of the Exchequer, and it would not be becoming in him to fly in the face as it were of his royal pupil, and offend courtly propriety by marrying a lady whom his Majesty had refused to recognize.

But while Lord Waldegrave was striving to digest his scruples, he found that the prize within his reach was daily becoming more precious in the eyes of several persons of distinction who had similar opportunities with himself of observing how much more that matchless face would grace a coronet, than the coronet would grace the face. The Earl also remembered that he was forty-four, and that there were younger rivals in the field who were likely to take advantage of his indecision. The result was that the King's Governor and Privy Purse, the Privy Counsellor, the Knight of the Garter, and the Teller of the Exchequer came to a decision that he must follow the example of the Honourable and Reverend younger brother of the Earl of Albemarle, and lay his honours at the feet of the lovely offspring of the erring apprentice. In the year 1759, Maria Walpole became

Countess of Waldegrave, and was received at Court: the Earl following the example of his grandfather who married a lady to whom there was a similar "objection," but then she was the natural daughter of a King by the sister of a Duke! *

Lord Waldegrave had some pretensions to unite himself with so intellectual a family as the Walpoles. He was one of the noble authors of his time, having written "Historical Memoirs from 1754 to 1758:" it is true he was the historian of rather a short period, but in four years much may be done, and therefore much may be written about it.

His Lordship never had cause to be dissatisfied with his choice. His happiness was perfect, but unfortunately it was not of long duration. He had three daughters by his countess, who proved as good a mother as she was a wife. Shortly after the birth of the last child, and four years after his marriage, Lord Waldegrave was smitten by a disease the most fatal of all human maladies to personal appearance; he was visited by the small-pox in an aggravated form. To a woman whose face, to use a familiar phrase, was her fortune, some sense of self-preservation might have been allowed in such a contingency, but the daughter of the tailor's apprentice forgot that she was a beauty and only remembered that she was a wife. Her uncle Horace bears the most enthusiastic testimony to her devotion to her husband under these trying circum-

* Henrietta, daughter of James II., and Arabella Churchill, sister of the first Duke of Marlborough.

stances; indeed, her conduct was as admirable as her person, and that seemed the perfection of human grace. Nothing however availed in favour of the sufferer; the fiat had gone forth, and Lord Waldegrave was in April, 1763, consigned to the vault of his ancestors.

Horace records his feelings respecting this distressing event in the following passages from letters written, in April 1763.

"I cannot say so much of my Lord, and not do a little justice to my niece too. Her tenderness, fondness, attention, and courage are surprising. She has no fears to become her, nor heroism for parade. I could not help saying to her, 'There never was a nurse of your age had such attention.' She replied, 'There never was a nurse of my age had such an object.' It is this astonishes one, to see so much beauty so sincerely devoted to a man so unlovely in his person; but if Adonis was sick, she could not stir seldomer out of his chamber."

Two days afterwards he writes:—

"I found Lady Waldegrave at my brother's; she weeps without ceasing, and talks of his virtues and goodness to her in a manner that distracts one. * * * Her fall is great, from that adoration and attention that he paid her, from that splendour of fortune, so much of which dies with him, and from that consideration which rebounded to her from the great deference which the world had for his character. Visions, perhaps; yet who could expect that they would have passed away even before that fleeting thing—her beauty."

Again, six days later, he continues the subject:—

"The loss is irreparable, and my poor niece is sensible it is. She has such a veneration for her lord's memory, that if her sister and I make her cheerful for a moment, she accuses herself of it the next day to the Bishop of Exeter,* as if he was her confessor, and

* Her sister Laura's husband now enjoyed this dignity.

that she had committed a crime. She cried for two days to such a degree that if she had been a fountain it must have stopped. Till yesterday she scarce ate enough to keep her alive, and looks accordingly; but at her age she must be comforted; her esteem will last, but her spirits will return in spite of herself."*

Lord Waldegrave had long ceased to take much interest in his royal pupil—from disgust at the manner in which the affairs of the state had been carried on by his mother and her favourite, Lord Bute, on both of whom he wrote severe satires which he showed his uncle Horace, who entertained a high respect for him, as he has taken care to record. The day before the Earl was seized with his mortal malady, the favourite tried to bribe him with the choice of Ambassador to France or Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, but he declined both.

"He stood so high in the esteem of mankind," says Walpole, "for probity, abilities, and temper, that, if any man could, he might have accomplished a coalition of parties, or thrown sense into that party, which, though acting for the cause of liberty, rather wounded than served it, so ill were they formed for counsel or conduct. Had he lived still longer, he must, by the deaths of the chiefs, have been placed incontestably at the head of that party himself."†

Horace Walpole continues his account of Lady Waldegrave under the date, April, 22, 1763.

"I brought my poor niece from Strawberry on Monday. As executrix her presence was quite necessary, and she has never refused to do anything reasonable that has been desired of her. But the house and the business have shocked her terribly; she still eats nothing, sleeps worse than she did, and looks dreadfully. I begin

* "Walpole Letters." Vol. iv. pp. 258, 260, 262.

† "Memoirs of the Reign of George III." Vol. i. p. 268.

to think she will miscarry. She said to me t'other day, 'They tell me that if my lord had lived he might have done great service to his country at this juncture by the respect all parties had for him. This is very fine; but as he did not live to do those services, it will never be mentioned in history.' I thought this solicitude for his honours charming. But he *will* be known by history. He has left a small volume of memoirs that are a *chef-d'œuvre*.* He twice showed them to me, but I kept his secret faithfully; *now* it is for his glory to divulge it."†

It was long before Lady Waldegrave would again venture into society; but society insisted upon having her, and the young widow, more lovely than ever on her re-appearance, was more than ever admired. Many of the noblest in the land sought to share their honours with the graceful relict of the departed Earl, but the Countess seemed obdurate; her three little girls engrossed all her affections and attention, and the Duke of Portland headed a long train of the fair widow's rejected suitors.

A few years subsequently another pretender to her hand entered the field, and the very woman against whom only a short time before the doors of St. James's were strictly closed, was now sought in marriage by the King's brother! A singular union of the two extreme links of the social chain took place, when his Royal Highness, William Henry, Duke of Gloucester married the daughter of the unfortunate Mary Clement, by which means it was not

* Published in 1821 in one volume small 4to., with the title of "Memoirs from 1754 to 1758, by James Earl Waldegrave."

† "Walpole Letters." Vol. iv. p. 265.

improbable that the descendant of the tailor's apprentice would in course of time fill that throne, to which her daughters had been denied all approach.

The third daughter of Mary Clement also made an excellent marriage: but we must leave the match-making lord of Strawberry to tell the story. On October 2, 1760, he writes:—

"I announce my Lady Huntingtower to you. I hope you will approve the match a little more than I suppose my Lord Dysart will, as he does not yet know, though they have been married these two hours, that at ten o'clock this morning his son espoused my niece Charlotte at St. James's Church. The moment my Lord Dysart is dead, I will carry you to see Ham House: it is pleasant to call cousins with a charming prospect over against one. Now you want to know the detail: there was none. It is not the style of our Court to have long negotiations; we don't fatigue the town with exhibiting the betrothed for six months together in public places. *Vidit, venit, vicit.* The young Lord has liked her for some time: on Saturday se'nnight he came to my brother, and made his demand. The Princess did not know him by sight, and did not dislike him when she did; she consented, and they were to be married this morning. My Lord Dysart is such a —— that nobody will pity him; he has kept his son till six-and-twenty, and would never make the least settlement on him: 'Sure,' said the young man, 'if he will do nothing for me, I may please myself; he cannot hinder me of ten thousand pounds a-year, and sixty thousand that are in the funds, all entailed on me!' a reversion one does not wonder the bride did not refuse, as there is present possession too of a very handsome person; the only thing his father has ever given him. His grandfather, Lord Granville, has always told him to choose a gentlewoman, and please himself: yet I should think the Ladies Townshend and Cooper would cackle a little."*

In another place the communicative uncle adds:

* "Walpole Letters." Vol. 4. p. 92.

"My brother's last daughter (Charlotte Walpole) is married, and as Biddy Tipkin says:—though their story is too short for a romance, it will make a very pretty novel—nay, it is almost brief enough for a play, and very near comes within one of the unities, the space of four and twenty hours. There is in the world—particularly in my world, for he lives directly over against me, across the water—a strange brute, called the Earl of Dysart.*—Don't be frightened, it is not he. His son, Lord Huntingtower, to whom he gives but four hundred pounds a-year, is a comely young gentleman of twenty-six, who has often had thoughts of trying whether his father would not like grand-children better than his own children; as sometimes people have more grand-tenderness than paternal. All the answer he could ever get was, that the Earl could not afford, as he has five younger children, to make any settlement: but he offered, as a proof of his inability and kindness, to lend his son a large sum of money, at low interest. This indigent has thirteen thousand pounds a-year, and sixty thousand pounds in the funds. The money and ten of the thirteen thousand in land are entailed on Lord Huntingtower. The young Lord, it seems, has been in love with Charlotte for some months, but thought so little of inflaming her, that yesterday fortnight she did not know him by sight. On that day he came and proposed himself to my brother, who with much surprise heard his story, but excused himself from giving an answer. He said he would never force the inclinations of his children; he did not believe his daughter had any engagement or attachment, but she might have: he would send for her and know her mind. She was at her sister Waldegrave's, to whom, on receiving the notification, she said, very sensibly—'if I was but nineteen, I would refuse point-blank; I do not like to be married in a week to a man I never saw. But I am two-and-twenty; some people say I am handsome, some say I am not: but I believe the truth is, I am likely to be at large and to go off soon.—It is dangerous to refuse so great a match.' Take notice of the *married in a week;* the love that was so many months in ripening could not stay above a week. She came and

* Lionel Tolmache, third Earl.

saw the impetuous lover, and I believe was glad she had not refused point-blank, for they were married last Thursday. I tremble a little for the poor girl; not to mention the oddness of the father, and twenty disagreeable things that may be in the young man, who has been kept and lived entirely out of the world; he takes her fortune, ten thousand pounds, and cannot settle another shilling upon her till his father dies, and then promises only a thousand a-year. Would one venture one's happiness, and one's whole fortune for the chance of being Lady Dysart! If Lord Huntingtower dies before his father, she will not have sixpence. Sure my brother has risked too much."*

In a subsequent letter he says:—

"Lord Huntingtower wrote to offer his father eight thousand pounds of Charlotte's fortune if he would give them one thousand a-year at present and settle a jointure on her. The Earl returned this truly laconic, for being so unnatural an answer:—

"'LORD HUNTINGTOWER,—I answer your letter as soon as I receive it: I wish you joy; I hear your wife is very accomplished.

"'Yours,

"'DYSART.'

"I believe my Lady Huntingtower must contrive to make it convenient for *me* that my Lord Dysart should die—and then he will. I expect to be a very respectable personage in time, and to have my tomb set forth, like the Lady Margaret Douglas, that I had four Earls to my nephews, though I never was one myself. Adieu. I must go govern the nation."†

Edward, the only son of Sir Edward Walpole, joined the army, and of him Horace has preserved a curious and not uninteresting anecdote.

"He was on the expedition to St. Maloes; a party of fifty men appearing on a hill, he was despatched to reconnoitre with only eight men. Being stopped by a brook, he prepared to leap it; an old serjeant dissuaded him, from the inequality of the numbers. 'Oh!'

* "Walpole Letters." Vol. 4. p. 95.

† Ibid. Vol. 4. p. 101.

said the boy, 'I will tell you what; our profession is bred up to so much regularity, that any novelty terrifies them,—with our light English horses we will leap the stream, and I'll be d——d if they don't run.' He did so—and they did so. However he was not content, but insisted that each of his party should carry back a prisoner before them. They had got eight, when they overtook an elderly man, to whom they offered quarter, bidding him lay down his arms. He replied they were English—the enemies of his king and country; that he hated them, and had rather be killed. My nephew hesitated a moment and then said, 'I see you are a brave fellow, and don't fear death, but very likely you fear a beating—if you don't lay down your arms this instant, my men shall drub you as long as they can stand over you!' The fellow directly flung down his arms in a passion. The Duke of Marlborough sent my brother word of this, adding, it was the only clever action in their whole exploit. Indeed I am pleased with it; for besides his spirit, I don't see, with this thought and presence of mind, why he should not make a general."*

This gallant young man subsequently attained the rank of Colonel.

* "Walpole Letters." Vol. 3. p. 390.

CHAPTER III.

THE WITS.

THE age in which Horace Walpole flourished produced a number of men moving in what was considered the best society, who became known amongst their contemporaries by the title of "the Wits." They gained this designation in consequence of each individual of the group having distinguished himself by a facility in the expression of quaint, droll, or brilliant thoughts. Some were merely pleasant conversationalists, others can only be considered as humourists, a few were happy in the construction of droll verses and impromptu *double entendres*—but the number was very small, who either on paper or *viva voce*, made any very brilliant contributions to the stock of ideas which constituted the common intellectual property about the middle of the last century.

If the pretensions of a majority of these pretenders to "wit" are narrowly looked into, we shall have some trouble in making out to the reader's

satisfaction, their claims to the title. But we must not allow the luxuriant growth which has resulted from the cultivation of this quality amongst us, within these last few years, to make us slight its more humble manifestations a hundred years ago. What is easily furnished to us once a-week by the wits of this age, those of the last would have found it impossible to supply in a year. They could not boast of a "Punch," for they possessed neither manufactory nor raw material for it: and as regards social pleasantry—the talent for which is rather too ostentatiously paraded—we may look in vain through the whole circle of jesting celebrities for the brilliance of a Barham, or the facility of a Hook.

A quick sense of the ludicrous and a ready appreciation of the droll, is pretty generally diffused in all communities; and the supply of puns, burlesques, parodies, and epigrams, is usually found to be tolerably extensive at almost every period. Such, however, are merely the low farces of the drama—its genteel comedy requires higher intelligence and a more elevated audience. The names of Bolingbroke and Chesterfield, Charles Townshend and Horace Walpole, might, it is possible, redeem a host of pretenders, whose sole claims to the rank of sayers of good things, must be found in a large fund of animal spirits, or a fund of impudence still more considerable.

Wit may make a great deal of what is thoroughly worthless obtain admiration—it possesses the art of

the cameo cutter, which, out of an unsightly shell, fashions the most admirable ornaments; but that peculiar talent which passes among some people for humour, and among others for wit, which exhibits itself in slang phrases and indelicate allusions, claims real kindred with neither. There is also a certain flippant treatment of serious subjects, that is frequently considered to be witty. But the illegitimate offspring of the mind are unhappily too numerous to be specified here. The less creditable publications of the day, are the foundling hospitals for their preservation.

Among those authors who have sought to give a definition of wit—Hazlitt, a lively if not a very profound writer, styles it "the eloquence of indifference,"*—which, we are afraid, does not afford any very clear conception of its properties. Were we to try to explain its nature and agency, we are somewhat apprehensive the reader's patience would be completely exhausted long before his understanding could be thoroughly enlightened, for wit is, in fact, a kind of occult quality that cannot be reduced to analysis—a mental philosopher's stone, the composition of which we must rest satisfied, is always to remain a secret. It is the true sunshine of the mind, that may be made to throw its glowing flashes over

* "Lectures on the Comic Writers, 1841." Page 24. Another favourite writer says, "Wit may be defined to be the arbitrary juxtaposition of dissimilar ideas for some lively purpose of assimilation or contrast—generally of both." Leigh Hunt. "Wit and Humour."

the most opposite subjects—now illumining the dulness of a barrister's brief—now irradiating the gravity of an occasional sermon; in one place blazing forth in the pages of a political pamphlet—in another gilding the very ordinary metal of a fashionable novel. The race of epigrammatists has lost some of its chief ornaments; when Sydney Smith and Talleyrand departed from amongst us, society could spare them less than the professions of which they had been ministers; our jocose *improvvisatori* have not yet recovered from the blow which deprived the world of Theodore Hook, Barham, and Thomas Hood. We ought to thank our stars that we can still boast of Moore, Thackeray, Dickens, and Jerrold; and congratulate ourselves immensely on the fact that Sir Bulwer Lytton, and D'Israeli, still allow of our now and then warming our dull imagination at the light that blazes from theirs.

Living under such influences in 1851, we are but little disposed for a liberal appreciation of their predecessors of 1746. The Bubb Doddingtons and Richard Williams's of the last age, make us fancy that we are looking at the Past with a telescope reversed. However, we must give up our prejudices—we ought always to remember that the period in which they flourished was the reign of slow-coaches—their wit travelled by the "flying waggon," and was terribly delayed by heavy roads—ours flashes forth along the wires of the electric telegraph; and sometimes performs the astounding miracle of arriving at the

most distant destination, a few seconds *before* it quits its starting place.*

In the brilliant circle of which Horace Walpole was so bright an ornament, there existed two distinct classes of *beaux esprits*, the one being social, the other literary—in one or two instances, the two were united in the same individual, for Chesterfield, Bolingbroke, Horace Walpole, and Sir Charles Hanbury Williams, have gained a reputation, both for writing and speaking *bon mots*. We question whether they spoke as brilliantly as they wrote. Others were unrivalled for *repartee*, whose literary compositions display no trace of a similar talent. We have looked in vain through what has been preserved of the writings of George Selwyn,† Richard Williams, Charles Townshend, and their pleasant associates, for that cleverness which shone so conspicuously in their conversation. We will, however, divide the group into the two classes we have just named, and call the quality which distinguished them—meditated and unpremeditated wit.

Unpremeditated or social wit is a quality rarely under-rated in any community. Indeed it frequently attains a degree of admiration scarcely to be credited, and sometimes very difficult to be accounted for.

* This miracle, "for the benefit of the country gentlemen," we would explain, were we not certain that they are as well aware of the difference of time in two distant places, as ourselves.

† Of George Selwyn's epistolary talent we possess scarcely a specimen. The work entitled "George Selwyn and his Contemporaries," 4 Vols., consists of letters addressed *to* him.

But those who see it only at a distance, cannot be fair judges of its worth. There may have been a thousand accessories which gave point and meaning to what in our ignorance of them we might deem dull and spiritless. Perhaps it is unreasonable to expect that the flash which electrified our grandfathers should impart any very forcible shock to ourselves. The quality they admired so much is in a great measure evanescent, and we must not be astonished should the champagne which exhilirated them, taste flat and insipid nearly a century after the cork was drawn.

With so much in the way of preface to the consideration of social wit in the Walpole *siècle*, the reader will perhaps be prepared for some account of one who, in that galaxy entitled to the name of Wits, held for nearly half a century the very first position.

The family of George Augustus Selwyn had been settled for many years at Matson, in Gloucestershire, when his father, Colonel John Selwyn, who had served as Aide-de-Camp to the Duke of Marlborough, and had taken a prominent place amongst the fashionable coteries of the reigns of George I and II, married Mary, daughter of General Farrington, of Kent. These nuptials do not appear to have withdrawn either himself or his partner from the circle they were both formed to adorn, for Colonel Selwyn became Groom of the Bedchamber to George II, and Treasurer to the Queen Caroline,* to whom Mrs. Selwyn filled the

* He was subsequently Paymaster of Marines. On the quarrel between George II and Frederick, Prince of Wales, Colonel Selwyn sided with the heir-apparent, under whom he held the post of Trea-

office of Bedchamber Woman. These occupations brought them into constant communication with the Walpoles; indeed, Lady Walpole and Mrs. Selwyn were as remarkable for the wit and talent with which they enlightened the dullest of Court circles, as their sons were for similar qualifications exerted amongst more congenial associates. Mrs. Selwyn's wit was as often quoted as her beauty; and, in other respects, there seems to have been a singular coincidence between the woman of the Queen's bedchamber and the lady of the King's Prime Minister. There was also a good deal of intimacy between Mrs. Selwyn and Sir Robert, and she did him yeoman's service when he had to combat the intrigues of the Howards, the Claytons, and the more active of the Court ladies, who, as principals or as agents, sometimes strove to undermine his interest. Mrs. Selwyn long outlived her brilliant friend, Lady Walpole, for she survived till the 6th of November, 1777, at which period she had attained her eighty-seventh year. The inscription on the tomb of herself and husband, describes them as "affectionate parents, kind to their dependents, charitable to the poor, and faithful and beloved servants to King George the Second and Queen Caroline."

Of their children, their second son, George Augustus, the inheritor of so much of his mother's talent, was born on the 11th of August, 1719. There can be no doubt that as the mothers of the future wits were so intimate, the sons were allowed to associate

surer, which he retained till his death.—This occurred on the 5th of November, 1751, in his sixty-second year.

at a very early age. The same public school was selected for them, and although young Selwyn left Eton for Hertford College, Oxford, after Horace Walpole had quitted the same institution for Cambridge, they appear to have maintained a friendly intimacy which increased as they grew older. Whilst Walpole, however, was entering into the stormy contest of politics, Selwyn was pursuing the grand tour. The latter returned to his college about the year 1744, but apparently not from any decided partiality for a studious life, for it is but too clear that his conduct at this time was highly objectionable; and an outrage which he committed in company with several fellow students, neither wiser nor soberer than himself, was followed by his expulsion from the university.

A recent biographer apologises for his conduct as "rather intended to ridicule the errors and mysteries of the Church of Rome than as a deliberate insult to Christianity."* A relation of the circumstance will enable the reader to form his own judgment on this point. It appears that Selwyn had obtained possession of a silver chalice, used for the Communion Service, which, while at a tavern surrounded by a jovial party of his friends, he filled with wine, and handed round, exclaiming with mock gravity: "Drink this in remembrance of me." Some of his companions had sufficient self-respect to leave the room whilst this irreverent orgie was proceeding. It soon got talked

* "Selwyn and his Contemporaries." By John Heneage Jesse. Vols. i. ii.

about, and reached the ears of the authorities, who lost no time in inflicting upon the offender the greatest disgrace with which it was in their power to mark their sense of the insult he had cast upon the university and upon its faith.*

In a letter from a Captain Nicholson, who evidently was one of Selwyn's least respectable associates, it appears that Selwyn withdrew himself from Oxford

* Although this extreme measure excited a great deal of ill-feeling against the Vice-Chancellor, there can be little doubt it was the only course open to him. The students of Oxford had recently disgraced themselves by excesses of the worst description. In one of these, several of Selwyn's friends had brought upon themselves the verdict of wilful murder by a coroner's jury, in consequence of a poor fellow, known to have been drinking in their company overnight, having been found in the morning with his skull fractured, close to the chambers of his profligate entertainer. We have every reason to believe that out of this offensive jest of Selwyn's, arose an infamous fraternity, founded by Sir Francis Dashwood, afterwards Lord Le Despencer, Chancellor of the Exchequer in the Ministry of Lord Bute. "He had founded a society," says our authority, "denominated, from his own name, *The Franciscans*, who, to the number of twelve, met at Medmenham Abbey, near Marlow in Bucks, on the banks of the Thames. Wilkes was a member of this most unholy fraternity, of which he makes mention in his letter to Earl Temple, written from Bagshot, in September 1762. "Rites were there celebrated, of a nature so subversive of all decency, and calculated, by an imitationof the ceremonies and mysteries of the Roman Catholic Church, to render religion itself an object of contumely, as cannot be reflected on without astonishment. Sir Francis himself officiated as high priest, habited in the dress of a Franciscan monk, engaged in pouring a libation from a Communion cup to the mysterious object of their homage." Surely it is not too much to say that the originator of so depraved an association deserved the punishment he received. Wraxhall. "Historical Memoirs of his own Times."

immediately after the commission of the outrage, in order to avoid expulsion; and, finding that justice was not so easily to be thwarted, he drew indecent caricatures of the Vice-Chancellor and Proctors, which he caused to be circulated in the university, and, in other ways, pretended to brave their resentment.* A letter from the Hon. Richard Leveson Gower, dated 28th July, 1745, says:—

"By the arrival of Lord Charles Scott† from the Convocation, I find that you are expelled publicly, and your name is to be fixed up as usual on such occasions: nothing remarkable happened. There is a strong edict against keeping company with you, that is to be fixed up with the other programme."‡

Selwyn hurried to town, and took up his residence at White's coffee-house,§ where he was already well known; and although all prospect of college honours was closed against him, he was far from being without resources, as his father had a few years previously procured him two valuable sinecures, known as Clerk

* "Selwyn and his Contemporaries," Vol. i. p. 88.

† Second son of Francis, Duke of Buccleuch, and grandson of the Duke of Monmouth. He died in the University, in the year 1747. It was his Lordship, with Lord George Neville, fifteenth Lord, and first Earl of Abergavenny, and two companions, all friends of Selwyn, who were implicated in the shocking homicide alluded to in a preceding page. "Walpole Letters." Vol. ii. p. 182.

‡ "Selwyn and his Contemporaries." Vol. i. p. 76. Walpole adds to his narration of this affair, "One pities the poor boys, who undoubtedly did not foresee the melancholy event of their sport." His pity seems to be as much misplaced as one or two other words in the same sentence.

§ Now Arthur's Club House in St. James Street, then the rendezvous of the wits of the period.

of the Irons, and Surveyor of the Melting of the Mint. He now gave himself up to that society of which, for the future, he was to be so distinguished an ornament. He seems to have got into a more creditable circle than that he had figured in at Oxford, and to have particularly cultivated the friendship of Horace Walpole and his political friends. This led, in 1747, to his obtaining a seat in the Legislature; and the death of his elder brother, in June, 1751, followed by that of his father in December of the same year, put him completely at his ease, for in succeeding to the family estates he had come into possession of borough influence sufficient to command three votes, which made him at once a person of considerable consequence in the House. Horace Walpole and he were much together, and to the frequent references to his friend, which Walpole makes in his delightful correspondence, George Selwyn is chiefly indebted for that facetious immortality which has been given to his name.

Selwyn was soon one of the most brilliant of the shining characters that gave animation to the dull Court of George II. He sought however not only a reputation as an utterer of sparkling impromptus—but as decided a notoriety for certain eccentricities quite as likely to bring him into notice. Of the latter there were two which were singularly opposed to each other. It seemed as though he wished to dally with two of the most striking extremes nature could have presented to him; for one fancy was a remarkable partiality for the society of little children—the other a partiality equally

strong for scenes of death and corruption. The two seem incompatible; yet the very man whose heart apparently knew no enjoyment so precious as making happy those of his fellow creatures, who were but just entering the threshold of existence, would put himself to unheard-of inconvenience, to attend an execution, or observe the decay of poor mortality long after the gates of life had been closed upon it for ever.

Of the former of these eccentricities many interesting anecdotes have been preserved. The children of his most intimate friends to all appearance were as much his as theirs; and there can be no question that he loved them quite as well as if he could have claimed towards them the nearest ties of relationship

The family of the Earl of Coventry and that of the Earl of Carlisle in particular attracted his attention. The letters addressed to him contain abundant evidence of the interest he took in their welfare. In one instance, a friend writes of one of his *protegées*, "You are so little interested about the master and mistress of that house, any further than they relate to *Nanny*, that I will not presume to mention them till I have told you her little ladyship seems happy, and tolerably reconciled to her new Mamma,"* and another communication states "The weather altering so much for the worse, and the gloom of November setting in, I could not prevail on myself to plough my way home from Bath, through the d——d deep roads of Worcestershire; for which reason you will think me

* "George Selwyn and his Contemporaries." Vol. i. p. 304.

a worse correspondent than usual, as *Nanny* cannot be mentioned."*

But the most extraordinary of his juvenile attachments was directed to the child of the Marquis and Marchioness Fagniani; and it forms one of the most singular and romantic incidents that ever occurred, in what is called "Real Life." We do not know much of the Marquis, but if we knew the same of him as of his Lady, we should not have much to say in his favour. There can be little doubt that the reputation of the Marchioness was far from being immaculate, and that her husband did not testify any decided interest in its preservation. She was a woman of fashion, and in the gay circle to which she had obtained admittance, she met Selwyn,—already one of its most distinguished members. They became very intimate: and soon scandal was busy with her whispers at the expense of the poor Marquis. The lady became the mother of a little girl, christened Maria, and this child Selwyn loved with a devotion which very far exceeded his predilections for any of his former pretty *protegées*. His solicitude for her welfare amounted to extravagance. His attention to her interests was most incessant—her health, her

* "George Selwyn and his Contemporaries." Vol. i. p. 314.—Selwyn's little friend was Lady Anne Coventry, who was married to Edward, second son of Thomas, Lord Foley, on the 20th of October, 1778, which marriage was dissolved in 1787, and she subsequently married Captain Samuel Wright, on the 13th of July, 1788. There are some interesting early letters to her partial friend preserved in the work just quoted. Vol. i. p. 384.

education, her happiness, were the objects of his untiring care. His friends said it was impossible for any man to be attached to a child as he was to the little Fagniani without being its parent, and then it began to be generally suspected that Selwyn, who had been the favoured lover of the gay Marchioness, must have been the father of her beautiful child.

Unfortunately, there was another claimant in the field for the honour of such covetable paternity. A nobleman, a friend both of Selwyn and the Marchioness, believed himself to be the happy man, and he was equally lavish in affording evidence of his affection for the young lady. A more formidable competitor for such distinctions, it was scarcely possible for Selwyn to have found, for he was the celebrated William Douglas, Earl of March, better known by the title of Duke of Queensberry, to which he afterwards succeeded.

Lord March may have been persuaded that he was the father of Miss Fagniani, for all the thoughts he could spare from the turf, the gaming table, and from a brilliant bevy of foreign mistresses, were devoted to her welfare. He had many calls upon his time. He had been appointed a Lord of the Bedchamber, at the succession of George III, and Vice-Admiral of Scotland in 1778—he was a leading man at Doncaster, and one of the chief members of all the most fashionable clubs in town; besides which he led a most dissipated and extravagant life; in which all the recources of wealth were exhausted to pamper his

appetite, and gratify his passions. Nevertheless he found a few odd moments now and then to bestow on the young lady he regarded as his daughter.

As he frequently corresponded with Selwyn on the most familiar terms, the latter was always cognizant of his Lordship's troubles, fancies, and intentions. Now he was made aware of his heavy losses at hazard—the next moment he had all the particulars of some new *liaison*—the behaviour of the reigning Sultana, whether the Zamperini,* or the Rena,† or whatever foreign dancer or singer happened to be the fashion, was as freely commented on as the tricks of his jockeys, or the failures of his race-horses; and every fragment was sure to bring to mind the dissapated, exhausted, faded man of pleasure, eager after new enjoyments from inability to relish the old.

* "I believe I told you, in my last, that March has returned from Newmarket with his new mistress. Signora Zamperini, for that's the dear creature's name, comes to the house: but as he finds a difficulty in separating her from that rascally garlic tribe, whose very existence depends on her beauty, I do not think he means to make her what our friend the Countess was." "Selwyn and his Contemporaries." Vol. ii. p. 97.

† The Countess alluded to in the preceding note. Of her Lord March writes, on learning that she was dissatisfied at being superseded: "The *Rena* must be mad if she takes anything of this sort in a serious way. If she does, there is an end of our society; if she does not, we shall go on as we did. I am sure I have all the regard in the world for her, for I love her vastly, and I shall certainly contrive to make her as easy and as happy as I can. I like this little girl, but how long this liking will last I cannot tell: it may increase or be quite at an end before you arrive." Ibid. Vol. ii. p. 106.

Selwyn, strangely enough, was the depository of his Lordship's feelings towards his *protegées*, and often acted as his agent on their behalf. In one of his letters he says:

"Pray, my dear George, find out something that will be agreeable to the little Teresina. Consult the Rena about it; *une jolie robe*, or anything else she likes; and let her have it from me *pour la nouvelle année*. I would send her something from here, but you will be able to get her something that will please her better where you are."*

Among those whom he honoured with the company of himself and his mistress, was Horace Walpole, who says in a letter of the date of September 9th, 1762, "I have had Lord March and the Rena here for one night, which did not raise my reputation in the neighbourhood."†

Not the least remarkable feature in the times we are attempting to delineate, is the existence of such a voluptuary, who was quietly allowed to follow his own vicious inclinations at the expense of the community: he was a licensed pirate, from whose black flag female honour was never safe; a mere animal, insensible to every idea of moral obligation and virtuous sympathy. We have already, from his own hand, given evidence of his want of manly feeling in his treatment of his mistresses; a dozen instances of the same kind might be added. His vices grew more shameless by the toleration they appear to have received; when too old for much exertion he kept a look out from his

* "Selwyn and his Contemporaries." Vol. ii. p. 115.

† "Walpole Letters." Vol. iv. p. 237.

town house in Piccadilly, at all the pretty women who passed his windows, and whenever one struck his fancy, he had a mounted messenger ready to track her to her home, and all the machinery at hand to secure to his sated appetite the pleasures of seduction.

The power enjoyed by the Press—by those moral arteries which diffuse throughout the entire national body the healthful current of public opinion—renders scarcely possible a repetition of such characters in the metropolis, and would leave them little chance of impunity even in the provinces. If this wondrous empire sometimes renders its influence distasteful, we may reasonably look over its defects in consideration of the vast benefit society has derived by its power over such great offenders against morality as this licentious peer. The existence of such a person, however, shows that there must have been almost as much insensibility to honour and decency in his associates, as in himself. And this was very conspicuously shown in the facility with which George Selwyn lent himself to countenance his Lordship's follies. If we look through his correspondence we shall find him labouring assiduously in settling his little embarrassments with his fair and frail associates, and ready to undertake any commission that might be rendered necessary by his Lordship's numerous and somewhat entangling engagements. Had Lord March's friend been a mere parasite, such conduct would have been natural; but Selwyn in every sense

of the word was a gentleman; he was moreover independent, and might have scorned the imputation of being a tuft-hunter.

In October 1778, in consequence of the death of his cousin Charles, third Duke of Queensberry, favourably known as the patron of Gay, Lord March succeeded as next heir to the ducal dignity, and the extensive estates belonging to it. Did this increase of responsibility bring with it any regard for himself and society? No, it only brought more Renas and more Zamperinis, and a further acquaintance with those aids to abandoned living, which wealth in immoral hands was then sure of providing. The Duke, however, continued to correspond with his friend Selwyn, and to make use of him in a thousand delicate embarrassments. He remained the leading man at the turf, in the rascality of which he had been educated from boyhood, having in his earlier days lent himself so completely to the business, as to ride some of his own matches. He supported the dignity of a courtier with equal ability; till on the mental indisposition of George III becoming manifest, he, under the impression that it was incurable, abandoned Pitt and the King, for Fox and the Prince of Wales; on his Majesty's recovery, he was disagreeably convinced of his error by being dismissed from his post of Lord of the Bedchamber, which he had held for twenty-eight years.

The Duke of Queensberry had too many resources to care much for such a deprivation as this. One of

them was the nurture and education of the young lady whom he chose to regard as his daughter. There can be but little doubt that the Marchioness Fagniani had caused his Grace and Selwyn to believe that the child to which she had given birth, had peculiar claims upon them. Herself and her daughter reaped the full benefit of this *finesse;* the two presumptive fathers rivalling each other in showing the young lady every tender attention.

Selwyn had contracted so powerful an attachment to the little "Mie Mie," for such was the appellation by which the young lady was known, that he entreated to be allowed to have the sole charge of her; an arrangement upon which he had set his heart almost ever since her birth, and urged all his friends to facilitate. Her parents had allowed Miss Fagniani when very young to remain with him when they left England. They claimed her soon afterwards, but it was with the greatest reluctance that Selwyn gave her up. His extraordinary affection for the child was well known, and was a subject of conversation even with the King. In the Duke of Queensberry it excited more curiosity than jealousy. A mutual friend, the Reverend Dr. Warner, fancied he observed a likeness between his Grace and Mademoiselle Fagniani, of which he informed Selwyn. He says:—

"The more I contemplate his face, the more I am struck with a certain likeness to the lower part of it; his very chin and lips—and they are rather singular. But you will never be *d'accord* upon this

interesting subject, as I am sorry to be too much convinced: but that you know better than I."*

His Grace, however, as is evident from his letter, did all he could to assist Selwyn's views. The Fagnianis appear to have been the only serious obstacle he ever met with;† and they withstood his solicitations and anxious entreaties, till they produced in him a state of mind which greatly alarmed his friends.

These people, apparently, were desirous of driving a hard bargain for the child. So great was the distress this conduct of theirs occasioned Selwyn, that among the different plans suggested to him for obtaining possession of her, was the extraordinary one of *marrying* her: a plan, too, recom-

* "Selwyn and his Contemporaries." Vol. iv. p. 133. The resemblance was remarked by others. Ibid. Vol. iv. p. 196.

† A good deal of angry correspondence from Madame Fagniani and her friends was occasioned by Selwyn's hesitation in restoring her daughter, and it even appears to have elicited a remonstrance from the Austrian Governor of Milan. Selwyn made handsome proposals, to which the lady replied, "Thank Heaven, she is in want of nothing; she belongs to a very great house; she has fortune enough to be independent of every one: and I could assure you that no greater misfortune could befal her than that of living in a strange country, separated like a foundling from her family; maintained by a person who does not belong to her, and in regard to whom, the world would always question by what title he adopted the child." "Selwyn and his Contemporaries." Vol. iii. p. 219. If this declaration could be received as evidence, it would at once settle the question of paternity; but the reader will be better able to judge of the degree of credit to be given to it by the result of subsequent negotiations for that arrangement, to the equivocal appearance of which the lady seemed so sensible.

mended by a clergyman well aware of the relationship Selwyn believed to exist between them.* His beloved Mie Mie, was at last allowed to take up her residence with him, without his having recourse to matrimony; and Dr. Warner, instead of publishing the banns of their union, wrote a poem, in praise of her beauty. She flourished at Matson, under the untiring affection of its proprietor, and won all hearts by her attractions.

It is impossible to convey an adequate idea of Selwyn's fondness for children, more particularly of his passion for Mademoiselle Fagniani. There was something absolutely feminine in his complete abandonment to these graceful feelings. We are now about to delineate another phase of his character, as opposite to the one we have been describing as darkness is to light. It seems almost impossible that the nature which could rejoice in the gladdening sunshine of the smiles of children, should be ready the next moment for a gloomy vault, amid the mouldering relics of mortality, or hurry to gratify a morbid curiosity by witnessing the death struggles of a condemned felon. But evidence of this strange taste is too often brought forward to allow of a moment's doubt of its existence. In a letter of

* He was the Rev. Dr. Warner: and his arguments are extremely curious. The doctor appears to have been a divine of rather frisky temperament, if we are allowed to judge of his character by his Letters. See "Selwyn and his Contemporaries." Vols. iii. and iv.

Horace Walpole to Sir Horace Mann, dated September 1st, 1750, after relating a gossiping anecdote of the Craggs and Arthur More, he says :—

"I told that story, the other day, to George Selwyn, whose passion is to see coffins, and corpses, and executions: he replied, 'that Arthur More had his coffin chained to that of his mistress!' Lord, said I, how do you know that? 'Why I saw them the other day in a vault at St. Giles.'"

Selwyn appears to have passed a good deal of his time in inspecting vaults and cemeteries; and was as well known to the sextons of the churches he honoured with his visits, as was "Old Mortality" to the custodians of the grave-yards in which he pursued his strange vocation. Walpole goes on to say "He was walking this week in Westminster Abbey, with Lord Abergavenny, and met the man who shows the tombs. 'Oh! your servant, Mr. Selwyn,' exclaimed the man, 'I expected to have had you here the other day, when the old Duke of Richmond's body was taken up.'"

These sepulchral visits furnished him with information which often surprised more than it entertained those, who, it might be thought, were most interested in it. On one occasion he was inspecting the mansion at Cornbury, in company with Mrs. Frere and Lord Abergavenny, who were supposed to entertain a warm regard for each other. The lady was rather flighty and restless, hurrying from one place to another, till Selwyn with a very grave air called her back, complaining of her not letting him

see anything, "And you are a fool;" he added, somewhat ungallantly, "you don't know what you have missed in the other room."

"Why, what?" she enquired eagerly.

"Why, my Lord Holland's picture."

"Well, what is my Lord Holland to me?" she asked, with some impatience.

"Why, do you know;" said he, "that my Lord Hollands body lies in the same vault in Kensington Church, with my Lord Abergavenny's mother."

We can imagine the astonishment of the lady at receiving such unexpected intelligence. "Lord!" adds Horace Walpole, after relating the anecdote, "she was so obliged, and thanked him a thousand times."

Selwyn's passion for witnessing executions was equal to his taste for haunting sepulchres. Indeed, anything having relation to a criminal was so interesting to him, that it was sure to attract his attention. This was displayed in an extremely amusing light on one occasion, when Horace Walpole captured a man breaking into his house:—

"I despatched," he writes, "a courier to White's, for George Selwyn, who, you know, loves nothing upon earth so well as a criminal, except the execution of him. It happened very luckily that the drawer, who received my message, has very lately been robbed himself, and had the wound fresh in his memory. He stalked up into the club-room, stopped short, and with a hollow, trembling voice, said 'Mr. Selwyn, Mr. Walpole's compliments to you, and he has got a housebreaker for you.'"

During the trial of the rebel lords, some ladies

passed reflections on his inordinate curiosity, particularly alluding to his having gone to see Lord Lovat's head cut off: Selwyn replied in a deprecating tone, "I made amends by going to the undertaker's to see it sown on again." His mind sometimes seems to have been so absorbed by the ceremonies of capital punishment, that on going to a dentist he chose to give the signal for having his tooth taken out, by dropping his handkerchief. But the best anecdote of this nature, is that relating his adventure in Paris, when he mingled with the crowd for the purpose of getting a better view of the terrible punishment of Damien, who was broken on the wheel for making an attempt on the life of Louis XV.

"Being among the crowd," says our authority, "and attempting to approach too near the scaffold, he was at first repulsed by one of the executioners; but having informed the person that he had made the journey from London solely with a view to be present at the punishment and death of Damien, the man immediately caused the people to make way, exclaiming at the same time; *Faites place pour Monsieur; c'est un Anglais et un amateur.*"*

* There is another account of this incident equally characteristic, "Every thing being previously prepared, and the day arrived, George took his stand, dressed in a plain brown nob wig, and as plain a suit of broad-cloth, an undress he generally wore, and which at that time of day evidently pointed him out as an English *bourgeois*. The horrid ceremony commenced, when Mr. Selwyn, from his dress and the sympathy which he shewed upon this occasion, so attracted the notice of a French nobleman, that coming round to him on the scaffold, and slapping him on the shoulders, he exclaimed, '*Eh, bien*, Monsieur Anglais, êtes-vous arrivé pour voir ce spectacle?' 'Oui, Monsieur.' 'Vous êtes bourreau?' 'Non, non, Monsieur, je n'ai pas cette honneur, je ne suis qu'un amateur.'" "Gentleman's Magazine, for February 1791," p. 183. The existence of this

We cannot help being a little disappointed at the paucity and inconclusiveness of those oral testimonies which support Selwyn's reputation as a wit. If nothing more than what has come down to us was required to establish the claims of a man of fashion to the fame of being one of the wittiest men of his time, we cannot help thinking that according to more modern ideas on the subject, society in the last century was amazingly thankful for small favours. Either his best things have not been preserved, for those are straws only that are found in abundance in Horace Walpole's amber, or there must have been some peculiarity of manner which gave his sayings an effect to which they cannot lay claim without it.

The latter, we have reason to believe, was the case, for Selwyn is described as uttering his jests with an affectation of gravity, that often partook very much of the character of torpidity, to the droll effect of which, a habit he had of turning up the

strange taste has been positively denied, and the anecdotes are said to have been mischievous inventions of Sir Charles Hanbury Williams and Lord Chesterfield, which Selwyn never took the trouble to deny. On this point the following anecdote is worth repeating, "Sir Charles was one day telling a large company a similar story of his attending upon executions, with many strokes of rich humour, received with great glee before his (Selwyn's) face, when a gentleman, who sat next to the object of their mirth, said to him in a low voice, 'It is strange, George, so intimate as we are, that I should never have heard of this story before.' 'Not at all strange,' he replied in the same voice, 'for Sir Charles has just invented it, and knows that I will not by contradiction spoil the pleasure of the company he is so highly entertaining.'" "Gentleman's Magazine." Vol. lxi. part 1, p. 299.

whites of his eyes, added very materially. We discover among his sayings no brilliant aphorisms the cleverness of which confers on them the indestructibility of proverbs—no sparkling *jeux de mots*—few brilliant repartees, and but an indifferent supply of those *bons mots,* without which no Frenchman could support the smallest of witty reputations. His amusing speeches amount at best to droll conceits—burlesque instead of witty ideas ; in short they go to prove that he was rather a punster than a wit. We will append a few of the best specimens of Selwyn's jests, that the reader may judge for himself of their nature.

Going into White's one night, he observed James Jeffries playing at piquet with Sir Everard Falkener, the Postmaster-General, who was losing heavily, and exclaimed, pointing to the winner, "See, how he is robbing the mail."

There had been an execution at Tyburn, of a malefactor of the name of Charles Fox,—his illustrious namesake quizzingly asked Selwyn whether he had been to witness it, covertly alluding to the strange passion for such sights he was known to possess; when Selwyn retorted, "No, I make a point of never frequenting rehearsals."

A waiter at Arthur's, to which club Selwyn belonged, had been committed to prison to take his trial for felony. As soon as Selwyn heard of it, he exclaimed, with even more than his usual gravity, "What a horrid idea he will give of us to the people in Newgate!".

Observing Mr. Ponsonby, the speaker of the Irish House of Commons, at a hazard table, at Newmarket, where his money in bank bills to a considerable sum, changed hands very rapidly, he said to a neighbour, "Look, how easily the Speaker passes the money bills."

He did not spare the sex when he chose to direct his remarks

to them—an amusing instance of which is given in his reply to the beautiful Lady Coventry, when she asked him to admire a handsome new dress she wore, covered with spangles the size of a shilling; Selwyn affected ecstasy, as he assured her she would be change for a guinea.

Some allusions being made to the hasty departure of one of the Foleys to the continent, in order to avoid the pecuniary engagements which he had entered into with some Israelitish money lenders—"It is a *Pass-over*," he observed, "that will not be relished by the Jews."

Whatever we may think of these specimens of Selwyn's facetious vein, there is no doubt that they were so extravagantly appreciated by his contemporaries that the author was regarded as the most brilliant conversationalist of his age. His influence was unbounded in the world of fashion; the principal clubs rivalled each other in their eagerness to have him as a member; he was the lion of the most select coteries; nobles of both sexes were proud of the honour of being in his confidence; and it was looked upon as a valuable distinction to be allowed to entertain him at their country mansions. He was a frequent guest at Strawberry Hill, and Walpole returned his visit by a brief stay at his seat in Gloucestershire, while on a tour in that part of England. When describing this tour, he says:—

Sept. 1753.—"I stayed two days at George Selwyn's house, called Matson, which lies on Robin Hood's Hill: it is lofty enough for an Alp, yet is a mountain of turf to the very top, has wood scattered all over it, springs that long to be cascades in twenty places of it; and from the summit it beats even Sir George Lyttelton's views, by having the city of Gloucester at its foot, and the

Severn widening to the horizon. The house is small but neat. King Charles lay here at the siege; and the Duke of York, with typical fury, hacked and hewed the window shutters of his chamber, as a memorandum of his being there. Here is a good picture of Dudley, Earl of Leicester, in his later age, which he gave to Sir Francis Walsingham, at whose house in Kent it remained till removed hither; and what makes it very curious is, his age marked on it, fifty-four, in 1572. I had never been able to discover before in what year he was born. And here is the very flower-pot and counterfeit association, for which Bishop Sprat was taken up, and the Duke of Marlborough sent to the Tower."*

Selwyn was so great a favourite at Strawberry Hill, that its owner, not satisfied with having him frequently in his house, continually introduced him in his letters. There was nothing said of or about him that Walpole did not preserve at length, for the amusement of his friends abroad or at home. But he was not content with such memorials alone, and he caused a picture to be painted of him by Sir Joshua Reynolds. Selwyn was there represented as one of a group whose powers of social pleasantry were frequently exerted for the entertainment of their hospitable host.

Selwyn, towards the latter period of his life, was fond of haunting the clubs, where his word was law, and he occasionally used his power in a manner that can scarcely be called justifiable. He was also a frequenter of the gaming-table, where he pursued the amusement with a great deal of eagerness.

"When I left the University," says one who knew him well, "so little did I know of general society, that I came up to London

* "Walpole Letters." Vol. iii. p. 22.

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stored with arguments to prove the authenticity of Rowley's Poems, and now I was at once immersed in politics and fashion. The very first time I went to Boodles', I won twenty-five guineas of the Duke of Norfolk. I belonged at this time to five clubs—Miles and Evan's, Brookes', Boodles', White's, and Goosetrees'—The first time I was at Brookes', scarcely knowing anyone, I joined from mere shyness in play, at the faro-table, where George Selwyn kept bank. A friend who knew my inexperience, and regarded me as a victim decked out for sacrifice, called to me 'What, Wilberforce, is that you!' Selwyn quite resented the interference, and turning to him, said in his most expressive tone: 'Oh Sir, don't interrupt Mr. Wilberforce, he could not be better employed.'"*

"Nothing," adds the writer, "could be more luxurious than the style of these clubs;" but they are very far exceeded in luxury by the clubs of the present day. "Fox, Sheridan, Fitzpatrick, and all your leading men frequented them, and associated upon the easiest terms; you chatted, played at cards, or gambled, as you pleased." Towards one of these "leading men" Selwyn entertained an extraordinary prejudice—this was Sheridan, whose superiority in everything that constitutes a wit may probably have excited it. He regarded him with such unfavourable sentiments that, when Sheridan was balloted for at Brookes', Selwyn, and his friend, Lord Besborough, were invariably present to deposit the one black ball that excluded him. This was continued many times, to the great annoyance of the candidate's friends, who were determined to bring him into the club; and having discovered what was the obstacle to their wishes, they devised a plan to get rid of their vigilant

* Life of Wilberforce, Vol. i., p. 17.

opponents, as the only way of securing their friend's election.

One evening a note came to Lord Besborough, apparently written to him by Lady Duncannon, to inform his Lordship that fire was consuming his house in Cavendish Square, and imploring him to lose not a moment in returning home. Away went Lord Besborough in the first sedan he could obtain. Shortly after, Selwyn received a message no less alarming, that Mademoiselle Fagniani was suddenly attacked with severe illness. Out he rushed, in the direction of his own domicile. Almost immediately their backs were turned, the members proceeded to the election of Sheridan, to which, of course, there was now no opposition. He had scarcely been announced as a member of the club, when Lord Besborough and Selwyn hastily returned, having discovered the trick which had drawn them from their post, but found they were too late to prevent the catastrophe they had so long endeavoured to avert.

It is said that Selwyn's dislike to Sheridan arose from the latter having been instrumental in depriving him, in 1782, of a lucrative appointment—that of Paymaster of the Works, when Burke's Bill for reducing the Civil List came into operation. But though he lost this, Mr. Pitt recompensed him on the 23rd of December, 1783, with the post of Surveyor-General of the Crown Lands.

We believe there were other causes for his distaste, and they must have been powerful, to account for the

very bitter terms with which he always was in the habit of mentioning his name. The loss of the Paymastership could not have affected him very greatly, as he held the offices of Surveyor of the Melting and Clerk of the Irons in the Mint, and Registrar in the Court of Chancery in the island of Barbadoes. It is supposed that these gifts were rewards for the fifty years he had been a Member of Parliament.

As great a favourite as he was in the best English society, he was still more popular in the select circles of Paris. His conversational powers were held in the highest esteem in the French capital. Chief among the many distinguished individuals who honoured him with their notice was no less a personage than the Queen of Louis XV, whose partiality for him excited some little scandal. Here also he won the favourable opinion of Madame Du Deffand, to whom he subsequently introduced Horace Walpole. In short, he fell so naturally into the lighter tone and pleasanter style of French conversation that he became quite at home among the Parisians, and with more than one of their public favourites he was on terms of intimacy.

His parliamentary career though so prolonged, was far from being brilliant, for with his usual singularity he chose to keep silence where he was bound to make his voice heard. Gloucester owned him as her representative for nearly forty years—at last his long lease of this seat was disturbed by his unpopular support of Ministers in their ill-judged conflict with America, when he was obliged to rest satisfied with the

representation of his own borough of Luggershall. It mattered little, however, for what place he was returned, for at St. Stephen's he was always torpid; this was not all the mischief, for when he was not asleep, his jests absorbed the attention of men of more active habits, and lost their services to the nation.

Yet this oratorical silence did not arise from want of merit. Wraxall, who knew him well, and who was his colleague in parliament from 1784 to 1790, says that "he was thoroughly versed in our history, and master of many curious as well as secret anecdotes, relative to the House of Stuart and of Brunswick."

If he was not dozing in the House of Commons, it might be pretty confidently asserted that Selwyn was slumbering somewhere else. At one or other of his clubs, when the largeness of the stakes for which he was gambling did not in the least diminish his lethargy, he was almost sure to be found engaged in all the duties of the card-table, with closed eyes, and apparently weary limbs.* At this time the wit was far from presenting any of that lively appearance which we generally expect to see associated with intellectual sprightliness. His pallid aspect and fleshless figure formed a complete opposite to every reason-

* "You will believe when I tell you, that t'other night having lost eight hundred pounds at hazard, he fell asleep upon the table, with near half as much more before him, and slept for three hours, with everybody stamping the box close to his ear. He will say prodigiously good things when he does wake." "Walpole Letters," Vol. iii. p. 83.

able expectation formed of the fashionable Yorick of the eighteenth century. Were it possible to compose a *Hortus Siccus* of jesters, George Selwyn would have been an admirable example of that species of the human plant in a dried state.

Walpole relates a severe accident which befell his friend under the date, March 18, 1764.

"George Selwyn has had a frightful accident, that ended in a great escape. He was at a dinner at Lord Coventry's, and just as he was drinking a glass of wine, he was seized with a fit of coughing, the liquor went wrong, and suffocated him; he got up for some water at the side-board, but being strangled, and losing his senses, he fell against the corner of the marble table with such violence, that they thought he had killed himself by a fracture of his skull. He lay senseless for some time, and was recovered with difficulty. He was immediately blooded, and had the chief wound, which is just over the eye, sewed up—but you never saw so battered a figure. All round his eye is as black as jet, and besides the scar on his forehead, he has cut his nose at top and bottom. He is well off with his life, and we with his wit."

In the latter years of his life the gout and the dropsy attacked him with great severity. Happiness, no doubt, he enjoyed in the society of the interesting young lady he had, after so much difficulty, secured under his own roof. His other little favourites had grown up out of reach of his attentions, but he was getting too old for pets, old or young. In this state he survived for many years, and occasionally made one of a group of decrepid jokers who had still life enough left in them to utter epigrams against those forward juniors who sought to usurp their places.

Selwyn was in his seventy-second year when the

fate which overtakes the witty as well as the dull, silenced his pleasantries for ever. On the 25th of January 1791, Walpole writes:—

"I am on the point of losing, or have lost, my eldest acquaintance and friend, George Selwyn who was yesterday at the extremity. These misfortunes though they can be so but for a short time, are very sensible to the old: but him I really loved, not only for his infinite wit, but for a thousand good qualities."*

To this affectionate memorial the writer adds, two or three days subsequently, "Poor Selwyn is gone to my sorrow, and no wonder Ucalegon feels it." The sad event occurred at his town house, Cleveland row, St. James's. He had made every necessary preparation for it. It is satisfactory to be able to record that the reprobate of the Oxford outrage became an edifying Christian at the approach of his dissolution. He had also taken care to leave behind him the most convincing testimony of his attachment to the child of his adoption. Maria Fagniani was left the bulk of his property, which proved to be very considerable.†

* "Walpole Letters," Vol vi., p. 385.

† "He bequeathed her ten thousand pounds, four per cent. annuities, and twenty-three thousand pounds on her marriage, or on her coming of age—in case of her death, such sums to go to the younger children of the Earl of Carlisle, who had also been his favourites. To the Hon. Charles Townshend, and Ebrow Woodcock Esq., he leaves a hundred guineas each,—to Pierre Michalin his valet, thirty pounds a-year, and his wardrobe. The residue of the real and personal estate (Luggershall excepted) which was reserved for the Townshend family, he bequeathed to his friend the Duke of Queensberry. The Executors were the Marquis of Stafford, the Earl of Carlisle, and Ebrow Woodcock Esq., of whom only the two last administered." "Gentleman's Magazine," for 1791, p. 183. Vol. lxi.

The Duke of Queensberry, though he did not suffer his feelings to betray themselves so prominently as had been the case with his deceased companion, regarded the young lady with quite as much affection as it was possible to expect from a person of his habits. He pretended to laugh at Selwyn's excessive attachment, but the result proved that the Duke's regard for Mdlle. de Fagniani was quite as strong as his friend's. Notwithstanding he possessed these creditable feelings, his conduct continued to the end extremely objectionable. He found himself growing so old and feeble, that recourse was had to milk baths and other remedies to invigorate his exhausted frame. He contrived to enjoy existence for some time longer after his own fashion, subsequently to the death of his attached friend, and his mansions in Piccadilly and Richmond were daily the scenes of indescribable folly and wickedness.

A literary gossip of the last century who knew the Duke well, and apparently everybody else, has left us the following graphic sketch of his Grace at this period :—

"I lived in almost daily habits of intercourse with him, when I was in London, during the last seven years of his protracted career. His person had then become a ruin : but not so his mind. Seeing only with one eye, hearing very imperfectly only with one ear, nearly toothless, and labouring under multiplied infirmities, he possessed all his intellectual faculties, including his memory. Never did any man retain more animation, or manifest a sounder judgment. Even his figure, though emaciated, still remained elegant : his

manners were noble and polished; his conversation gay, almost entertaining, generally original, rarely instructive, frequently libertine, indicating a strong, sagacious, masculine intellect, with a thorough knowledge of man. If I were compelled to name the individual who had received from nature the keenest common sense of any person I ever knew, I should select the Duke of Queensberry.

"Unfortunately, his sources of information, the turf, the drawing-room, the theatre, the great world, were not the most pure, nor the best adapted to impress him with a favourable idea of his own species. Information as acquired by books, he always treated with contempt; and used to ask me what advantage, or solid benefit, I had ever derived from the knowledge that he supposed me to possess of history; a question which it was not easy for me satisfactorily to answer, either to him or to myself.* Known to be immensely rich, destitute of issue, and unmarried, he formed a mark at which every necessitous man or woman throughout the metropolis directed their aim. It is a fact, that when he lay dying in December, 1810, his bed was covered with billets and letters to the number of at least seventy, mostly indeed addressed to him by females of every description and of every rank, from Duchesses down to ladies of the easiest virtue. Unable, from his extenuated state, to open or to peruse them, he ordered them as they arrived to be laid on his bed, where they remained, the seals unbroken till he expired."†

If there is a feature in society more repulsive than another, it is the homage which all classes pay to wealth. In this instance it assumed an aspect perfectly revolting, for here were some score of individuals chiefly of the sex the Duke had most injured and degraded, thrusting upon this octogenarian

* We cannot entertain a very high opinion of the writer, after such an acknowledgement; but Sir Nathaniel Wraxall is not likely to be quoted as a great authority.

† "Historical Memoirs of his own Times," by Sir Nathaniel Wraxall. Vol.

debauchee evidence of their own worthlessness; for the sole motive which led them to crowd these memorials upon his death-bed, was the sordid expectation of obtaining some share of the incalculable wealth which he was known to possess. The "duchesses down to the ladies of the easiest virtue," a distinction, in this case, we believe without a difference, were frantically elbowing each other to get a portion of the treasures of this profligate *millionaire*. It must have been a bad state of things which produced such meanness and depravity.

The Duke's mansion in Piccadilly was his usual residence, but he had a beautiful villa a few miles from town, where he frequently entertained his friends.

"I remember," says a man of a very different complexion, "dining when I was a young man with the Duke of Queensberry, at his Richmond Villa. The party was very small and select: Pitt, Lord and Lady Chatham, the Duchess of Gordon, George Selwyn (who lived for society, and continued in it till he looked really like the wax-work figure of a corpse) were amongst the guests. We dined early that some of our party might be ready to attend the Opera. The dinner was sumptuous, the views from the villa quite enchanting, and the Thames in all its glory; but the Duke looked on with indifference. 'What is there,' he said 'to make so much of in the Thames? I am quite tired of it—there it goes, flow, flow, flow, always the same.'"*

This is very natural. To the sated epicure, to the faded libertine, the graceful current of this noble river must have been dreadfully monotonous. He might have been equally tired of the stars, and have repeated, "there they are: shine, shine, shine, always

* "Life of Wilberforce, Vol. iii. p. 416.

the same." Like the ancient Monarch, he sighed for a new pleasure. His sense of enjoyment was deadened by too constant action. His eyes were blind to the beauties that enraptured all else who beheld them; his heart was dead to all impressions which moved the feelings; he had become a mere animal machine, that could neither see, nor feel, nor enjoy any human pleasures. Although still sentient, he was, to all moral purposes, reduced to the original clay out of which his prototype was fashioned by the hand of his Creator.

At the advanced age of eighty-six the career of this modern Dives was brought to a close on the 23rd of December, 1810. Then came the anxious moment for the great man's Parasites. The princely fortune must be divided; and the hungry expectants impatiently awaited the opening of the will.*

* In consequence of the great wealth left by the Duke of Queensberry, and the number of persons interested in its distribution, his decease caused a considerable sensation in the metropolis. In addition to his large landed estates, which devolved on the Duke of Buccleuch and Sir Charles Douglas of Kilhead, of whom the latter succeeded to the Marquisate of Queensberry, his personal property amounted to nearly a million of money. To Maria Fagniani and her husband Lord Yarmouth, he not only bequeathed the sum of one hundred and fifty thousand pounds, his two houses in Piccadilly, his Villa at Richmond, and all the furniture which they contained, but Lord Yarmouth was also named his residuary legatee, by which it was supposed that a further sum of two hundred thousand pounds might eventually devolve on him. To Lord Douglas the Duke bequeathed one hundred thousand pounds; to the Duchess of Somerset, independent of her husband, ten thousand pounds; to the Countess of Dunmore, ten thousand pounds; to Lady Anne Hamilton, ten thousand pounds; to Lady Hamilton, four hundred

Mademoiselle Fagniani had, since the death of Selwyn, married Lord Yarmouth; her already large fortune was now to be immensely increased by the prodigality of a second father, for by the provisions

pounds a-year, and a thousand pounds; by a former codicil it stood one thousand pounds per annum, and two thousand pounds; to Mr. James, five thousand pounds; to General Hawkes Crawford, ten thousand pounds; General R. W. Crawford, five hundred per annum; to M. Pere Elvizee, his French Surgeon, five thousand pounds; to the Honourable General Richard Fitzpatrick, five hundred pounds a-year—on a former codicil it stood ten thousand pounds; to General Picton, five thousand pounds; to Mr. Douglas, one hundred and fifty thousand pounds; to Colonel Thomas, twenty thousand pounds; to Viscount Sidmouth, five thousand pounds; to Lady William Gordon, ten thousand pounds; to Sir James Montgomery, ten thousand pounds; to the Governors of the Lock Hospital, five thousand pounds; to the Governors of St. George's Hospital, five thousand pounds; and to the Cheque Clerk at Coutts' Bank, who kept his account, six hundred pounds a-year.

It is remarkable that though the Duke of Queensbery provided in a very liberal manner for all his male domestics, he made not the slightest provision in his will, for his housekeeper or any of his female servants, neither did he bequeath any legacy to his medical attendant, Mr. Fuller, though the latter for six years, had slept almost constantly by his bedside; this gentleman however ultimately recovered by a suit at law seven thousand five hundred pounds for his services. To Du Bois, who had been his house-steward for thirty years, he left three hundred pounds a-year; to his head groom, John Radford, two hundred pounds a year with his horses and carriages; to his confectioner, Burrell, two hundred pounds a-year; to his footman Michael, two hundred pounds a-year; to his Italian valet, one hundred pounds a-year; and to Signor Salpeitro, who had been leader of the band at the Italian Opera, one hundred pounds a-year. There were also bequests to three French ladies, of some celebrity, of one thousand pounds each. The will contained no less than twenty-five codicils, and the legacy duty alone, is said to have amounted to one hundred and twenty thousand pounds. On the

of the Duke's last testament her husband and herself shared between them four hundred thousand pounds. His Lordship he had selected as his residuary legatee, and to the lady his bequests were so magnificent that there could be no doubting his Grace considered himself to be connected with her by no ordinary tie. We do not know whether, in consequence of profiting so largely at his hands, Lord Yarmouth felt bound to follow his example; certain it is, that there was in the after career of his Lordship, who subsequently became Marquis of Hertford, a singular coincidence with that of the deceased Duke. Lord Hertford appeared to have caught the libertine mantle from his expiring benefactor, and he wore it in a manner equally magnificent. Like each other, they lived a sensual existence on the most costly scale, and very much like each other they appear to have died. The princely fortune of the Marquis required a distribution on a scale equally grand with that of the Duke—the similarity extended to the bequests, in which "French ladies of some celebrity" were not forgotten. It is to be hoped that the Marquis of Hertford may be looked upon as nearly the last of a line of profligate grandees whose aim throughout

31st of December, the Duke's remains were privately interred under the Communion Table in a vault in the chancel of St. James's Church, Piccadilly. They were attended to the grave by his executor, Mr. Douglas, and were accompanied by all the male domestics attached to the Duke's Household. "Gentleman's Magazine." Vol. lxxx. p. 659.

their several careers was ever their own gratification. This sort of *animal* first made its appearance in this country in the reign of the profligate Charles. The Duke of Buckingham was succeeded by Philip, Duke of Wharton; his Grace made way for the Duke of Queensberry, who was followed by the Marquis of Hertford. We trust, for the credit of human nature, that the species is now extinct, and that in due time such men will be generally regarded as fossil relics of an extinct state of society, which may make honest people marvel how the world could have borne with such contemptible, however splendid, eccentricities.

The Marchioness survived her husband many years. The proverb which says "that it is a wise child that knows its own father," is entitled to all respect, but in her case ignorance was infinitely more to her advantage. Her filial feelings were necessarily divided among three claimants, though we are not aware that the father *de jure*—the Marquis Fagniani—troubled her much on that score: and of the other two, if we are to regard what may be looked upon as their last words on this point, the Duke of Queensberry has the advantage over his rival, in the proportion that hundreds of thousands exceed tens. Poor Selwyn, nevertheless, had *his* superiority, which we hope had due influence over his idolized "Mie Mie," as long as he lived; he was as much the more intellectual as he was the more respectable of the

two. The Duke's correspondence consists of little more than accounts of gambling transactions and disgraceful *liaisons*—and this is all we possess of what, by way of compliment, we may call the productions of his mind.

Selwyn's talent, though rather too legendary to satisfy an honest biographer, is attested by many respectable authorities. Of these the one who seems to have known him longest and loved him best, says,—

"He was better by nature, as Jean Jaques will tell you we all are, than he was by grace, for besides excellent abilities, and a most pleasant imagination, as all the world knows, he had from her (as I could prove to you by a thousand instances) one of the most tender and benevolent of hearts; somewhat impaired, indeed, and no wonder, by the pestiferous air of a Court; and was calculated, had he been bred to a profession (instead of having the misfortune to be so rich as to add one to the number of those who, if they cannot shine like him, seem to be born to no manner of end) to be eminently useful to society, as he was delightfully ornamental."*

The writer adds the following graceful lines.

"If, this gay favorite lost, they yet can live,
A tear to Selwyn let the Graces give!
With rapid kindness teach oblivion's pall
O'er the sunk foibles of the man to fall;
And fondly dictate to a faithful muse
The prime distinction of the friend they lose.

* "Gentleman's Magazine." Vol. lxi. part i. p. 299. The writer is stated to have been Dr. Warner, the sportive clergyman whose effusions we have so frequently quoted. "Selwyn and his Contemporaries." Vol. i. p. 14.

'Twas *social wit*, which, never kindling strife,
Blazed in the small sweet courtesies of life;
Those little sapphires round the diamond shone,
Lending soft radiance to the richer stone."*

Of "premeditated" wit there were several bright examples at this period: but to the most important we have elsewhere alluded sufficiently at length. The compositions of Lords Chesterfield, Bolingbroke, and Hervey, have established their claims to this peculiar talent. Another contemporary, though once as celebrated as either, we believe to be less known at the present day. Of the conversational humour of Sir Charles Hanbury Williams, very few traces have survived; but of his facetious talent in literary composition we have abundant evidence. We meet, in Walpole's correspondence, numerous traces of his popularity as a writer of quizzical verses—most of them were political satires directed against the enemies of his patron Sir Robert Walpole, and some of these are disfigured with allusions, and even with words, that are extremely objectionable; he also sometimes indulged in satirical squibs on ladies, and on persons whose insignificance should have shielded them from such attacks. One of the smartest of these trifles, is his poem, entitled "Isabella, or the Morning," in which the writer humorously represents the Duchess of Manchester receiving morning visits; and the peculiarities of herself and friends are

* "Gentleman's Magazine" for April, 1791. Page 300.

hit off very amusingly. Another called "A Grub upon Bubb," is a laughable quiz upon Bubb Doddington, whose ingratitude to Sir Robert Walpole made him especially the object of Hanbury Williams' satire.

When Sir Robert first brought forward Hanbury Williams, he intended that the latter should be sent on a mission to the Court of Naples to acknowledge Don Carlos; and he was told that he should have four thousand pounds for the expenses of the journey: but the Duke of Newcastle, who was ever striving to insinuate himself into favour in opposition, knowing George II's. love of money, assured his Majesty that Mr. Page, the Minister at Florence, might fulfil the object of the embassy, at an expense of not more than five hundred pounds. The King, anxious to put the balance in his pocket, would not allow Mr. Williams the appointment—which greatly enraged Walpole against the Duke, and caused him to inveigh with much acrimony against his "*rascally tricks.*"*

In 1731, Mr. Williams married Frances, youngest daughter of Thomas Earl Coningsby, and soon afterwards was returned to Parliament for the county of Monmouth; he, however, spoke very little in the House, and did not appear to be very desirous of political greatness, for in 1739 he accepted the unimportant office of Paymaster of the Marines, which he held for several years. His facility in

* Lord Hervey's "Memoirs." Vol. ii. p. 452.

squibbing at last threatened to be attended with serious consequences. In 1746, he wrote an ode addressed to the Honourable Henry Fox, on the marriage of the Duchess of Manchester to Edward Hussey, Esq.,* an Irish gentleman, which contained some reckless assertions respecting the fortune-hunting characteristics of his countrymen; this so exasperated them that many of them are said to have entered into a league to provoke the writer to a duel. The only notice Mr. Williams seems to have taken of this, was to put forth another poem, entitled "An Ode addressed to the Author of the Conquered Duchess, in answer to that celebrated performance," which was only a little less offensive than its predecessor. This he followed with another to Edward Hussey, Esq.

He went to his house in Wales about this time, which gave his enemies an opportunity of stating that he hid himself from the resentment of the persons he had provoked: but if they were so desirous of fastening a quarrel upon him they might easily have followed him into Monmouthshire. Horace Walpole insinuates that he behaved on this occasion with a decided want of spirit: but of this there exists no proof.

The quarrel did not injure his prospects, for in the same year he had the honour of being installed a Knight of the Bath, was sworn of the Privy Council, and appointed Envoy to the Elector of

* Subsequently Lord Beaulieu.

Saxony, King of Poland. This position Sir Charles filled with singular credit, displaying, as Horace Walpole admits, "great talent for negotiation;" and writing home letters remarkable for their striking and animated pictures of the scenes and persons that had come under his observation. He became Envoy Extraordinary to the Court of Berlin, in 1750; but having in some of his communications home treated the Great Frederick with more freedom than was agreeable to that Prince, the latter discovered it, and contrived to render his situation so unpleasant, that Sir Charles was at his own request recalled, and sent to Dresden in 1751, where his diplomatic talents found a field more favourable for their display. Here he remained, with the brief interval only of a visit to England, till he was sent ambassador to St. Petersburgh for the purpose of effecting an alliance between Great Britain and the Courts of Russia and Austria.

In the object of his mission he in a short time promised to be perfectly successful, and had become extremely popular at the Court of the Czarina Elizabeth, when new combinations among the Great Powers caused his Government to enter into arrangements that completely nullified his proceedings. Greatly annoyed at the unpleasant position in which he now found himself with the Czarina, he desired to be recalled: but the King of Prussia having intimated a desire that he should remain at St. Petersburgh, which was coupled with a gracious

intimation to the same effect from his own Sovereign, he continued at his post for some weeks longer.

The embarrassments into which he had been plunged by the sudden change of policy in his Government, had however preyed upon his mind to such an extent, that it became necessary he should return home as speedily as possible. On his journey and while evidently in a state of insanity, a woman into whose power he fell at Hamburgh, contrived to obtain from him, although his wife was alive, a promise of marriage, and a bond for two thousand pounds; a further disaster met him while at sea through a fall into the hold of the ship; this might have been attended with serious consequences, had not prompt and copious bleeding been immediately employed.

Sir Charles arrived in England in the spring of 1758, and appeared to be quite convalescent. Accord- to Horace Walpole :

"He goes about again; but the world, especially a world of enemies, never care to give up their title to a man's madness, and will consequently not believe that he is yet in his senses."*

Lady Wortley Montagu, in a letter to her daughter, the Countess of Bute, affecting the moralist, thus alludes to him :—

"I hear that my old acquaintance is much broken, both in his spirits and constitution. How happy might that man have been, if there had been added to his natural and acquired endowments a dash of morality! If he had known how to distinguish between false

* "Walpole Letters." Vol. iii. p. 34.

and true felicity; and instead of seeking to increase an estate already too large, and hunting after pleasures that have made him rotten and ridiculous, he had bounded his desires of wealth, and had followed the dictates of his conscience! His servile ambition has gained him two yards of red ribbon and an exile into a miserable country, where there is no society, and so little taste that I believe he suffers under a dearth of flatterers. This is said for the use of your growing sons, whom I hope no golden temptations will induce to marry women they cannot love, or comply with measures they cannot approve. All the happiness this world can afford is more within reach than is generally supposed. A wise and honest man lives to his own heart, without that silly splendour that makes him a prey to knaves, and which commonly ends in his becoming one of the fraternity."*

Such sentiments from such a character would seem singular, were it not for the notorious facility with which those who have a beam in their own eye discover the mote in that of their neighbour.

Sir Charles did not long enjoy his apparent restoration to the blessings of health and reason. In the following summer, insanity again betrayed itself, and on the 2nd of November of that year, whilst in this deplorable state of mind, he destroyed himself by his own hand. This was a miserable extinction of so joyous a spirit; a melancholy conclusion to the career of one of the most brilliant wits of his age. He never did sufficient justice to the talents he possessed, and, by his recklessness, often left an impression that he was a mere trifler with as little moral as intellectual worth, who cared much more to live for the passing day than that his memory should survive

* "Lady Wortley Montagu's Letters." Vol. iii. p. 160.

to a prolonged future. The objectionable manner in which he was in the habit of referring to sacred subjects was, unfortunately, much in vogue at this period, and appeared in no one more prominently than in Horace Walpole—the burlesque on a portion of the Service of the Church, called "the Lesson of the Day," which was attributed to his pen, and is printed with his poems, is as offensive as anything to be found in Sir Charles Williams' works.

Notwithstanding that his poetical productions exhibited so many outrages against decency and good sense, they were collected in the year 1822, and published in three volumes, by Mr. Edward Jeffery, under the auspices of the late Lords Holland and Essex. They were dedicated to the present Lord John Russell; but when the latter became aware of the character of the deceased diplomatist's facetiæ, he lost no time in writing in these words a request to the editor to be spared the honour of the dedication :—

LORD JOHN RUSSELL TO MR. JEFFERY.

"28, Arlington Street, June 27.

"Lord John Russell presents his compliments to Mr. Jeffery, and as he has professed his readiness to comply with any request he may make, he hopes Mr. Jeffery will oblige him by leaving his name out of the advertisement, and cancelling that page in the copies which remain on sale."*

His Lordship's good taste, however, does not seem to have influenced many other persons, from whom something of the kind might have been expected ; yet, indications of a similar feeling being

* MS.

supposed to influence anticipated purchasers, elicited the following Philippic from the editor to a well-known antiquary, since deceased :—

MR. JEFFERY TO MR. UPCOT.

"Dear Upcot, 4, Pall Mall, June 18, 1822.

"It's with great pleasure I beg your acceptance of Sir Charles Hanbury Williams' works. The Parodies are from public printed and published copies, when the great Earl of Mansfield was Attorney-General, and the Earl of Hardwicke Chancellor, which published copies I have by me, and belonging to the first Marquis of Lansdown. How pious, how canting and insincere people are become!

"I know it will give you great pleasure in hearing his Majesty has ordered one; three of the Cabinet Ministers have purchased copies; the Earl of Lonsdale six copies; also many great ladies, which shows their great sense. There are much more indecent poems in Pope and Prior: &c."*

The "much more indecent" must be taken as an apology for the great ladies of 1822, although at best it is but an equivocal one. An apology, too, is necessary for Sir Charles, and this must be drawn from the fact that a want of delicacy was so common a deficiency among even people who boasted of the best breeding, that Maids of Honour of the last century, in their epistolary communications, are sometimes found making use of expressions which, in the present day, would rarely fall from the lowest of their sex.†

Horace Walpole was in habits of the strictest intimacy with both George Selwyn and Hanbury Williams for a considerable portion of their lives;

* MS.

† "Suffolk Correspondence."

but, on the latter becoming an Ambassador, their social intercourse could only be carried on when he made a visit to England; and in the last year of his life there appears to have been very little communication between them. The Lord of Strawberry Hill, in the occasional references he makes to his old friend in his correspondence and in the course of the history of his own times, upon which at one period he occupied so considerable a portion of his leisure, does not treat him with that consideration to which his claims on his attention fairly entitled him. The most favourable specimens of his abilities—his letters written during his official residence abroad—have been made public, but only to the extent of a few of the most remarkable.

To another and a more gifted member of the wits of his age, Charles Townshend, Horace seems in one or two instances to have given a more cordial tribute of admiration, but in others he is equally severe and ungenerous. Charles Townshend was the second son of Charles, third Viscount, and Ethelreda Harrison, who figure so prominently in Walpole's anecdotes; he was not only one of the most brilliant conversationalists of that period, but a man gifted with sterling talents, which pushed him forward in public life till, in 1766, he attained the office of Chancellor of the Exchequer, and was nominated one of the Lords of the Treasury. He died in September of the following year.

Of the Bubb Doddingtons, the Gyles Earles', and the thousand and one small satellites who shone

round the great luminaries of wit at a respectful distance, too much honoured by being allowed to scintillate in the horizon the others made so brilliant, we have little to say. To the former we have had occasion to refer sufficiently at large while tracing the career of his royal patron; of the latter* the indications of his existence are not sufficiently vivid in the present century to enable us to say anything respecting him that is likely to interest the reader.

* Gyles Earles' pretensions to wit rest on a few such sorry jokes as the following:—Some persons observing a steam issuing from the elder Horace Walpole's house at Whitehall, one of them exclaimed, "What, does that dirty creature, Horace's wife, ever wash her own linen?" "No," said Gyles; "but she takes in other people's."

CHAPTER IV.

GRAY.

THE life of a man of letters is proverbially barren of those sources of interest which call attention to the sayings and doings of men, living a more active career. The soldier eager for the honours of "th' imminent deadly breach," and the sailor daring the perils of the foaming deep,—the statesman venturing to uphold the banner of freedom amid the conflict of party, are objects that at once strike upon the attention by the prominence of their attitudes, and the energy of their vocations; but the man of letters is a thinking, not an acting being—the eagles, the stormy petrels, our heroes of land and water, belong to a species in the animal world quite distinct from him—he claims but the humble rank of the poor silk-worm who labours for others, and dies when his work is completed. Quietly goes on the process of the literary cocoon—it is the bone and sinew, the flesh and nerve of the manufacturer—it knows nothing of the gory honours of war—it is equally ignorant of the

awful marvels of the storm; the invisible filaments of the brain are carefully spun into a continuous thread that is to form a durable raiment for the minds of unborn generations, and when the industrious agent of this vast benefaction has executed his task, it too often becomes both his shroud and his monument—it contains the elements of his existence, and the evidence of his fame.

Such is the type of these humble creatures, whose lives are so uneventful to those in whose service they live and die. Humble creatures indeed! not only too humble to be honoured, but too insignificant even to be protected. The State allows them, when living, no position, on any consideration—the Church will afford them, when dead, a place in her edifices, only for "a consideration."—The Law seems to have omitted them from the Statute books; and all other professions unite in pillaging their honours, whilst denying them their countenance and assistance.

Who thinks of the aching head, the smarting eyes, the trembling hand, and the feeble body, when reading the vigorous thought that stirs and thrills the spirit of a whole nation? The man has become a chrysalis—dry, mis-shapen, and worthless. In the black fluid that dripped from the point of the unwearying quill, and disfigured with irregular lines innumerable pages of innocent paper, ran out the vital current that once brought fitful pulses to his heart—flowed forth the electric power that gave such wondrous energy to his brain. The page had less of

ink on its surface than of the higher elements of humanity—it possessed the vitality which this humble creature in the scale of creation had lost when he passed from amongst us.

There may be nothing like that which exists in romances, in the life of him who exhausts his powerful imagination in creating them; the course of the poet may be one of the commonest matter of fact; the career of the scholar is often entirely devoid of refined association; yet there ought to be an interest in the vast family of which he is a member, that should invest with romance, with poetry, the most insignificant, the most common, the most simple action of his honourable existence.

Although elsewhere we have had occasion to allude to him incidentally, we shall make no apology for drawing the attention of the reader more particularly to the career of one of the most inactive men of Letters which that unadventurous brotherhood ever produced. Viewed through the medium of the interest which legitimately attaches to genius, we are confident that the few incidents in the life of such a man as Thomas Gray will appear important links of a chain of existence whose value was precious beyond all calculation.

Gray was born on the 26th of December, 1716, in the city of London, and was the son of a respectable money scrivener in Cornhill, who however, notwithstanding his respectability, does not appear to have been very prudent. The boy's uncle, Mr. Antrobus,

was one of the assistant masters of Eton School, which caused his being sent at a proper age to that Institution, and here, as we have said, commenced his friendship with Horace Walpole, who besides being two years his senior, was in a position in society that made such an associate highly desirable to the young citizen. At Eton young Gray pursued his studies with remarkable zeal, and soon distinguished himself by writing Latin verses. His literary predilections recommended him to the son of the Prime Minister, with whom he wrote poetry and read romances till he left school for College. But at Cambridge the intimacy was resumed and continued with greater warmth than ever.

Gray was an indefatigable student,—he translated, and he wrote Latin poetry, and grew familiar with the Greek poets—he pored over Norse legends and Welsh triads—made himself master of Botany, dipped deep into philosophy, and was gathering rich stores from almost every branch of knowledge cultivated at the University, with the exception of the Exact Sciences, for the serious study of which his lively imagination unfitted him.

Very few of Gray's English poems written at College, have been preserved—as he then chose to woo the Muse in a Latin dress. The metrical translation from Statius, bears the date "May 8th, 1736," and deserves to be regarded as a creditable example of College versification. But those who had the care of his education, soon considered that it was sufficiently

advanced, to enable him to commence a profession with credit, and the law having been selected, it was arranged that he should leave his quiet rooms at Cambridge, to which he was much attached, for an obscure nook in the Temple, for which he had not the slightest inclination. That he would have followed the example set him by so many of his poetical predecessors when placed under similar circumstances.

"And penned a stanza when he should engross,"

is more than probable. To the representations and entreaties of his affectionate friend Walpole he owed his escape from becoming a bad lawyer.

Young Horace was about starting for the continent, and induced his schoolfellow to accompany him. The Temple career was abandoned, and instead of poring over musty law-books, the young citizen was absorbed in the study of foreign antiquities, or wandering from city to city with all the feverish restlessness of a highly imaginative mind, surrounded by new sources of wonder and admiration. The letters Gray wrote from abroad show how deep an impression was made upon his intellect by the numerous objects of interest presented to him whilst making the tour of France and Italy. He became more and more engrossed in the new studies thrown open to him, and apparently grudged every hour that could not be passed in study or contemplation. As he became more and more studious, he grew less and less social, and his attached friend, on whom foreign travel had exercised its most social influence, at last abruptly

broke up the long intercourse just as he was quitting Italy for home.

Many years later when the Rev. William Mason was preparing a biography of his friend Gray, then recently deceased, Walpole thus confesses to him the blameableness of his conduct regarding this estrangement.

"I am conscious that in the beginning of the differences between Gray and me, the fault was mine. I was young, too fond of my own diversions; nay, I do not doubt, too much intoxicated by indulgence, vanity, and the insolence of my situation, as a Prime Minister's son, not to have been inattentive to the feelings of one, I blush to say it, that I knew was obliged to me; of one whom presumption and folly made me deem not very superior in parts, though I have since felt my infinite inferiority to him. I treated him insolently. He loved me, and I did not think he did. I reproached him with the difference between us, when he acted from the conviction of knowing that he was my superior. I often disregarded his wish of seeing places, which I would not quit my own amusements to visit, though I offered to send him thither without me. Forgive me, if I say that his temper was not conciliating, at the same time that I confess to you, that he acted a most friendly part, had I had the sense to take advantage of it. He freely told me my faults. I declared I did not desire to hear them, nor would correct them. You will not wonder, that with the dignity of his spirit, and the obstinate carelessness of mine, the breach must have widened till we became incompatible."*

This explanation is honest and manly. The differences of character in the two friends were influenced by their different positions in society, and the reserve of one could not have been congenial to the freedom

* "Walpole Letters." Vol. v. Page 340. "Gray's Works." Vol. iv. Page 216.

of the other. They parted and accomplished the rest of their journey by different routes.

On quitting his friend at Reggio, Gray visited Padua, Milan, Turin, and Lyons, and returned to England in the summer of 1741, with a mind enriched by the variety of knowledge he had collected in his travels. A misfortune, however, awaited him for which he was ill prepared. His father died, and though Thomas was his only surviving child of a large family, he was left so ill provided for, as to prevent his resuming his study of the law without considerable assistance from his mother and aunt, which he refused to receive. He believed that the little property he possessed might be sufficient to allow of his returning to the University, and leading there the life of a genuine student—a kind of life that had singular attractions for him. He immediately made Cambridge his residence, and gave himself up to a course of severe study.

Gray now began to apply himself to the composition of English poetry. In June, 1742, he produced his "Ode on the Spring," which was written at Stoke Pogis near Windsor, the abode of his mother and aunts. His mind at this early period appears to have contracted that tendency to melancholy reflection which is so marked a feature in his writings—this brought upon him the well meant raillery of a schoolfellow who had shared his affections with Walpole, and more fortunate than his friend, still retained them—the concluding words were a sportive "Vale et vive paulisper cum

vivis." To this friend (West) Gray sent his poem, but his sensitive nature received a shock from which it never entirely recovered on learning that the voice whose cordial praises would have encouraged his Muse, was hushed in the cold silence of the grave. "A Sonnet to his Memory;" the "Ode on a Distant Prospect of Eton College;" that on "Adversity," and the "Elegy in a Country Churchyard" were written in the same year—and all bear marks of that tender melancholy which the sudden loss of the amiable object of his youthful regard had created: it must be confessed also that with merit of the highest order they bear marks of that inattention to correctness of versification which is commonly the most obvious fault of all inexperienced versifiers, however striking may be their genius.

There are but few poets whose most popular productions contain so many blemishes of this kind as disfigure the poems of Gray written at this period. Out of the five stanzas that comprise the "Ode on the Spring," there are only two free from defective rhymes. Out of the ten stanzas in the "Elegy," but four are creditably versified. The "Ode to Adversity" is better, inasmuch as two stanzas only out of six display this defect. It is a defect, however, that arises from an imperfectly educated ear, rather than from any mental deficiency—for the writer's productions of subsequent years show to what perfection in harmonious versification, practise could conduct him. The only thing surprising about it is, that one who seemed

never tired of improving his ideas, should have left such faults uncorrected.

In the year 1757, Horace Walpole had established a printing press at Strawberry Hill, and he selected the beautiful odes of his schoolfellow for his first essay in typography. On sending copies to Sir Horace Mann, and to one of the Florentine *literati* whose acquaintance he had formed during his tour in England, he says:

"I send you copies of a very honourable opening of my press—two amazing Odes of Mr. Gray; they are Greek; they are Pindaric; they are sublime! consequently, I fear a little obscure,—the second particularly, by the confinement of the measure and the nature of prophetic vision, is mysterious. I could not persuade him to add more notes; he says, whatever wants to be explained don't deserve to be. I shall venture to place some in Dr. Cocchi's copy, who need not be supposed to understand Greek and English together, though he is so much master of both separated."*

Notwithstanding the high appreciation of Walpole and other fine judges among the poet's friends, the admirers of the "Odes" were for some time select rather than numerous. Gray on the 17th of August writes to his friend Dr. Warton:—

"I hear we are not at all popular: the great objection is obscurity, nobody knows what we would be at: one man, a peer, I have been told of, that thinks the last stanza of the second Ode relates to Charles I. and Oliver Cromwell,† in short, the Συνετοὶ appear to be still fewer than even I expected.

In another place Walpole, writing to George Montagu, says,

* "Walpole Letters." Vol. iii. Page 309.

† "Works of Gray." Vol. iii. Page 165.

"You are very particular, I can tell you, in liking Gray's Odes—but you must remember that the age likes Akenside, and did like Thompson: can the same people like both? Milton was forced to wait till the world had done admiring Quarles. Cambridge told me t'other night that my Lord Chesterfield had heard Stanley read them as his own, but that must have been a mistake of my Lord's deafness. I think this would hurt Gray's dignity ten times more than his poetry not succeeding. My humble share, as his printer, has been more favourably received."*

The poet seems to have possessed a peculiarly nervous temperament, which attracted the attention of some of the idlers of the University to such a degree, as to cause him serious inconvenience and some annoyance. Under the date of March 12, 1756,

"Mr. Gray, our elegant poet," writes the Rev. John Sharp, "and delicate Fellow-Commoner of Peter House, has just removed to Pembroke Hall, in resentment of some usage he met with at the former place. The case is much talked of, and is this:—He is much afraid of fire, and was a great sufferer in Cornhill; he has ever since kept a ladder of ropes by him, soft as the silky cords by which Romeo ascended to his Juliet, and has had an iron machine fixed to his bedroom window. The other morning Lord Percival and some Petreuchians, going a hunting, were determined to have a little sport before they set out, and thought it would be no bad diversion to make Gray bolt, as they called it, so ordered their man, Joe Draper, to roar out 'fire.' A delicate white night-cap is said to have appeared at the window; but finding the mistake, retired again to the couch. The young fellows, had he descended, were determined, they said, to have whipped the Butterfly up again."†

The foolish trick of these foolish young men, was attended with no worse immediate consequences to

* "Walpole Letters." Vol. iii. Page 313.

† "Nichols' Illustrations of Literature of the Eighteenth Century." Vol. vi. Page. 805.

the studious and retired scholar, than a change of residence from one college to another; but we have reason to believe that it had a serious and permanent effect on his sensitive nature, and excited that dislike to the University he was subsequently at so little pains to conceal.

About two years after the death of Mr. West, by the solicitation of a mutual friend, a lady, the school-fellows were reconciled, and the friendship of Gray and Walpole soon became as warm as ever. Perhaps there was no longer that romantic devotion which characterized their early intimacy, but there was on both sides a high appreciation of each other's merit, which made the most solid foundation for friendship. Walpole's first letter to Gray is dated Arlington Street, February 15, 1759.* After some inquiries respecting Cambridge scholars and antiquarian matters of no great moment, he complains of an advertisement of some book that was to defend him from the "Critical Review," and requests the poet will deny his having any knowledge of it.†

This is one of numerous instances that appear in the course of Walpole's prolonged correspondence, of his sensitiveness to public opinion, about which in other cases he will be found apparently too careless.

* "Walpole Letters." Vol. iii. p. 433.

† "Observations on the account given of the Catalogue of Royal and Noble Authors of England, &c., &c., in article vi. of the 'Critical Review,' No. xxv. for December, 1758, where the unwarrantable liberties taken with that work, and the honourable author of it, are examined and exposed."

Among the poet's most intimate friends at this period was a young clergyman, the Rev. William Mason, whose poetical ability and partiality towards classical studies were congenial to his own peculiar tastes and predilections. Mason became known to Horace Walpole, and was occasionally a guest at Strawberry Hill with his friend. One of these visits was chronicled by their lively host under the date of May 5, 1761, when he says that he spent Sunday as if it were Apollo's birthday, for Gray and Mason were with him, and they listened to the nightingales till one o'clock in the morning.

Gray in a more cheerful spirit from this welcome resumption of old feelings and sympathies, wrote for his schoolfellow, his playful ode "On the death of a favourite cat, drowned in a tub of gold fishes." He was now acquiring a considerable poetical reputation. His ode "On a Distant Prospect of Eton College," had been published by Dodsley.* His Elegy having appeared in a magazine, and been much hawked about in manuscript, was given to the world by the same publisher, and speedily ran through eleven editions. It was fully as much admired as it deserved to be, and among other valuable friends, obtained for him the regard of Lady Cobham, the tenant of the mansion at Stoke Pogis, who induced Lady Schaub and Miss Speed to make the visit immortalized by the

* This is stated to have been the first of Gray's poems that appeared in print. Dr. Warton says "that little notice was taken of it" when it made its appearance.

poet in the "Long Story"—another playful effort of his, which proved the more healthy state of his mind at this period. His odes, however, and other lyrical compositions, were pronounced by the best critics so stirring and picturesque, so grand and vigorous, that they raised his name very high in the literary world, and the King proposed in 1757, to make him Poet Laureate—an honour he then declined, considering it had been degraded by the undeserving hands into which it had been lately consigned. The more congenial dignity of Professor of Modern Languages and Visitor at Cambridge, he obtained in 1768, but he never entered upon its duties. He made some preparations for fulfilling them, but either his natural aversion to society, his bodily ailments, which often became very distressing, or the laborious studies in which he employed his time, prevented his carrying his designs into execution. In this year he published certain poetical compositions, to which his friend Walpole thus alludes.

"Gray has added to his poems three ancient odes from Norway and Wales. The subjects of the two first are grand and picturesque, and there is his genuine vein in them; but they are not interesting, and do not, like his other poems, touch any passion. Our human feelings, which he masters at will in his former pieces, are here not affected. Who can care through what horrors a Runic savage arrived at all the joys and glories they could conceive, the supreme felicity of boozing ale out of the skull of an enemy in Odin's Hall?"*

If there is a poem in the English language, that

* "Walpole Letters." Vol. v. p. 197.

is more than any other identified with the taste and feelings of the English people, that poem is Gray's Elegy. It has long been a first favourite with all ranks and all ages. The most fastidious of the highly educated, and the simplest of the humbly taught, uniting in one deep and sincere appreciation of its beauty. It will be as often found gracing the boudoir of the lady of fashion as enriching the window-sill of the day-labourer. It is as generally among the first-fruits of the schoolboy's memory as among the last relics of the fading recollections of age. All read it—all quote it—all feel it.

The secret of this popularity lies in its intense nationality. The Poet has presented to his readers an evening landscape, cool, quiet, and exquisitely pastoral—breathing throughout that touching spirit of melancholy which pervades nature during her repose, as though the surviving hours were mourning for those which had preceded them to the great cemetery of oblivion. All the objects in it are English—all the emotions, sentiments, thoughts, and phrases, are intensely and purely those of English country life. We must indeed allow that Gray saw this English scene through a classical medium. He felt with a thoroughly English heart, but he thought only with Mimnermus, and other of the Greek poets, who practised most successfully the ἔλεγος.* His

* Gray was well acquainted with the principal elegiac writers both Greek and Roman, from the earliest examples of Tyrtæus and Callinus, to the latest of the followers of Catullus and Ovid.

versification is evidently modelled on the hexameter and pentameter as employed by the elegiac poets of Greece to express their moral reflections and melancholy meditations. But this relates only to the form and spirit of the poem—its material was native, however foreign was its style. It is as truly an English scene as one of Constable's landscapes.

The opening of the poem gives the reader the key note—that plaintive minor which runs through it so touchingly to the last line—and he at once feels that he is on holy ground with one of those High Priests of Nature, whose vocation it is to touch the contemplative mind with the purer and nobler impulses of humanity. The mournful sentiments of the poet awake a saddening echo in his own breast—the melancholy ideas are solemnly daguerreotyped upon his own soul. A few stanzas are read, and a magnetic influence unites both reader and poet as though they had but one spirit—the mutual sympathy thus called into action has created a perfect understanding, an exquisite harmony, a sweet and gentle communion of sentiment that, throughout our wide-spread family is, as the great poet has expressed, that "one touch of nature" which makes "the whole world kin."

And yet this poem, unique and admirable as it is —has been the object of that scrutinizing criticism which, taking our most delicate fabrics, and placing them under the lens of its solar microscopic glance, declares its delicate tissues to be the coarsest

cordage, and its fair and even surface, the most unsightly of worthless materials. A critic has been found who could show his skilfulness in analyzing the ingredients of this incomparable composition, and, according to his account, he has discovered it to be entirely unworthy the trouble he gave to the analysis. He thus commences his task:—

"'The curfew tolls the knell of parting day.'

Dr. Warton would read, 'The curfew tolls—the knell of parting day.' The expression, however, is inaccurate. The curfew-*bell* is the general expression of the old poets; the word toll is not the appropriate verb; it was not a slow bell tolling for the dead; hence—

'Curfew was *ronge*—lyghts were set up in haste.'

And Shakspeare, 'None since the curfew rung;' and, 'the curfew bell hath *rung*, 'tis three o'clock!' But there is another error—a confusion of time. The curfew tolls, and the ploughman returns from work. Now, the ploughman returns two or three hours before the curfew rings; and the 'glimmering landscape' has long ceased to *fade* before the curfew. Thus are splendid images huddled together, and truth and nature lost sight of. 'The *parting-day*' is also incorrect; the day had long finished. But if the word 'curfew' is taken simply for the 'evening-bell,' then also is the time incorrect, and a knell is not tolled for the *parting*, but for the *parted*.

'And leaves the world to *darkness* and to me.'

'Now fades the glimmering landscape on the sight.'

Here the incidents instead of being progressive, fall back, and make the picture confused and inharmonious; especially as it appears soon after that it was not *dark*, for 'the moping owl does to the moon complain,' "

In this way the critic proceeds through every stanza, showing it "the seamy side without," with

an intelligence in detecting faults never exemplified so conspicuously since the days of Aristarchus. We object to this hypercriticism, as an inapplicable test. The features of the Apollo, if looked at through Lord Rosse's gigantic telescope, would not appear less irregular, uncouth, and preposterous, than must a poetical work of this description, subjected to so sharp a scrutiny. But we are by no means satisfied with the objections and exceptions so liberally brought against it. We regard the author's use of the words *curfew, toll, knell,* &c., &c., as belonging to those poetical licenses which have always been allowed to the imagination. The mathematician's objection to one of the finest epic poems ever written—that *it proved nothing*—is about as valid as those of the critic to this exquisite production.

But he is not satisfied with manifesting its faultiness. He proceeds in the same mechanical manner to deny its originality.

> "This furrow oft the stubborn glebe has broke;
> How jocund did they drive their team a-field,
> How bent the wood beneath their sturdy stroke."

"'Stubborn glebe' is from Gay," says the critic; "'drive a-field' from Milton, 'sturdy stroke' from Spencer, &c., &c." The discoverer of these claims might have gone much further in this direction. It is a pity that he did not add that every word the poet has made use of may, without any difficulty, be found in Johnson's Dictionary. Two writers employing the same peculiar adjective surely does not

constitute a case of plagiarism. Gray was unusually choice in his phraseology. His extremely refined taste made him difficult to please in the selection of words. If ever it could be said of any one that he strove "to gild refined gold and paint the lily"—it might be stated of this over-fastidious poet; for nothing was sterling enough, nothing sufficiently delicate in his ideas, to satisfy him, and therefore he kept on adorning and enriching till his elaborate workmanship occasionally lessened rather than increased the value of his materials. His corrections became an extravagance—an excess—a disfigurement.

It is not at all unusual for an imaginative writer, when pursuing the same train of thought, to make choice of some epithet peculiarly characteristic of the idea he is desirous of expressing. In this way Gray may have trespassed on the property of his predecessors; but in this way all modern poets have similarly trespassed. There must be identity of phrase and idea to constitute a case of plagiarism. Gray was very far from being a plagiarist—but if the poverty of his invention had reduced him to such resources, his bias would have led him towards the writers whom he had most studied. He would have become a plagiarist of Pindar and Tyrtæus—of Theocritus and Bion. The various examples which the critic has adduced of passages in the Elegy corresponding with others in various authors, amount at most to those singular coincidences of phrase from

which the most original minds, when under rigid criticism, have rarely been found free.

Coleridge has defined *prose* to be, "words in their best order," and poetry, "the best words in their best order," which, with all due deference to so eminent an authority, are but unsatisfactory definitions. If good prose consists only in a mere arrangement of *words*, then must he who writes elegantly, or after the most approved models of his age, be more entitled to admiration than the most original mind that less respects the prevailing fashion. The definition is unsatisfactory, as it places literary composition too much on the footing of a mechanical art. We are not supposed to be in the blissful ignorance of the respectable M. Jourdain, when he made the astounding discovery that he had been speaking prose all his life without knowing it.

There is, however, much less certainty respecting what constitutes poetry. What sometimes passes for prose may be as much too poetical in its character to retain that name—as that which its manufacturers are pleased to call poetry, is prosy in every distinctive feature. We could name several prose authors whose productions are replete with poetical passages. Sir Bulwer Lytton, among our own countrymen—Lamartine among Frenchmen—Göthe among the Germans, are examples; but whenever the imagination of the writer rises above the cool atmosphere of matter-of-fact into the warmer regions of fancy, he will be certain to express his ideas in a poetical diction as

though he had abandoned the ordinary language of *le bourgeois gentilhomme* for the most carefully constructed rhymes that ever enriched an album. As for prosy writers of poetry, your steady counters of fingers and jinglers of words, that labour so assiduously to have the discovery made for them that they have been writing all their lives only as M. Jourdain talked—their name is legion. Poetry is not so easy a thing to write as these gentlemen have persuaded themselves.

It has been well said by a very high authority, that "There is no profession on earth which requires an attention so early, so long, or so unintermitting, as that of poetry; and indeed as that of literary composition in general, if it be such as at all satisfies the demands both of taste and sound logic."*

It is evident that Gray entertained the same opinion. From the first account we have of the retiring school-boy to the last recollection of the college recluse, we find him engaged in the same process. He strove to earn the honoured name of poet, and slowly, and after much toil, put forth his claims to such a title. It is true that several modern authors have written their half a dozen epics in less time than it took him to produce the few odes and other trifles which make up the sum of his poetical works. But those who have drawn such bills upon Immortality may rest assured they will never get Posterity to endorse them. About fifteen hundred lines constitute

* S. T. Coleridge. "Biographia Literaria." Vol. i. p. 46.

the whole of Gray's poems; but of these it is not too much to say, not one will be forgotten. Though less than a century has elapsed since they were published, they have gained that credit with the present generation which has enabled them to form a portion of the floating intellectual capital of the country.

In a postscript to one of his letters to Mr. Montague, dated July 4, 1760, Horace Walpole says,—

"My Lady Ailesbury has been much diverted, and so will you too. Gray is in their neighbourhood. My Lady Carlisle says, 'He is extremely like me in his manners! They went a party to dine on a cold loaf, and passed the day; Lady A. protests he never opened his lips but once, and then only said, 'Yes, my Lady, I believe so.'"*

Probably it was to this society the poet alluded when writing to his friend Dr. Clarke:—

"For me, I am come to my resting-place, and find it very necessary, after living for a month in a house with three women that laughed from morning till night, and would allow nothing to the sulkiness of my disposition. Company and cards at home, parties by land and water abroad, and (what they call) *doing something*, that is, racketing about from morning till night, are occupations, I find that wear out my spirits."†

From the preceding extract it is clear that the poet did not feel at his ease in the company of fine ladies, whose behaviour towards a person in Gray's position was not likely to lessen a natural reserve, acquired by habits of study and want of familiarity with society: half the trouble the said fair ones took to win the attention of some shallow coxcomb, would

* "Walpole Letters." Vol. iv. p. 70.

† "Gray's Works." Vol. iii. p. 353.

have rendered the man of genius as communicative as themselves, to a great deal better purpose: but in the last century, women of this class were so absorbed in their own small traffic of common-places, that they could not give a thought to the interchange of ideas on anything like a liberal and comprehensive basis. Among the accomplished women of the higher circles at the present day, we are willing to believe that an entirely different system prevails.

An interesting illustrated edition of "Gray's Elegy" was published a short time since in five different languages, besides the original—Greek, Latin, German, French, and Italian; there are also versions in existence in Spanish and Portuguese*—it was translated into Latin by a gentleman of Jesus College of the name of Wakefield. A Latin version of the Bard was printed at Cambridge with translations of the poet's "Latin Odes," by Edward Barnaby Green a fellow-commoner of Bennett College, subsequently a wealthy porter-brewer in Westminster, who also made a respectable translation of "Juvenal." Another Latin version of the Bard was published at Chester.

An infallible criterion of genius is its universality. In whatever region it may be native, it will flourish in all climates with a like luxuriance. Ideas emanating from the sweet South have been easily naturalized in the frigid North, and the thoughts and feelings of the East have been transplanted into the West with

* "Gentleman's Magazine," Nov., 1839. Page 470.

as perfect success as though indigenous to the soil. Thus the noblest of our intellectual productions, those of Shakspeare, have taken root in every civilized land without reference to temperature or position ; a similar diffusive reproductiveness has attended the product of a totally opposite climate, known as the "Arabian Tales of the Thousand and One Nights." This characteristic of genius renders it an ever-flourishing Banyan, that in different languages repeats itself, till the whole civilized world is linked together in the enjoyment of a common source of gratification.

Though an elegiac tone pervades several of Gray's productions, his epitaph on Sir William Williams, which is in the same versification,—that on Mr. Clark, and the sonnet on the death of his schoolfellow, Richard West, are all that can be classed with his immortal elegy. By far the greater number of his poems are odes, which are regularly constructed on the most approved classical model. The first Pindaric, "The Progress of Poesy," is worthy of its inspired prototype. It is scarcely possible for poetry to bear more distinct marks of *finish ;* for every line is most carefully constructed of the choicest materials, and the whole put together with a degree of skill that leaves nothing to be desired. We cannot forbear quoting the concluding lines, for the sake of the information they convey of the poet's earliest predilections :—

"Oh, Lyre divine, what daring spirit
Wakes thee now? Though he inherit
Nor the pride nor ample pinion
That the Theban eagles bear,
Sailing with supreme dominion
Through the azure deep of air.

Yet oft before his infant eyes would run
Such forms as glitter in the Muse's ray
With orient hues unborrowed of the sun;
Yet shall he mount and keep his distant way
Beyond the limits of a vulgar fate;
Beneath the Good how far—but far above the Great."

We are not so disposed to acquiesce in the first part of the last line, as in its conclusion. Gray's position would admit of few superiors in intellectual worth. He had in him higher qualities and greater attainments than his modesty would permit him to be aware of.

His well-known ode, "The Bard,"* divides the favour of his admirers with the one we have just noticed. Perhaps of the two it may be the more picturesque,—the more bold, graphic, and imposing. It is, in truth, a most spirit-stirring production, and its figures stand out in full relief, like some noble fresco in a princely hall. The Ode for Music possesses some fine lines, but the poem reads rather as an echo of

* "Gray has been here: he has begun an ode, which if he finishes equally will, I think, inspirit all your drawing again. It is founded on an old tradition of Edward I. putting to death the Welsh bards. Nothing but you, or Salvator Rosa, and Nicholas Poussin can paint up to the expressive horror and dignity of it." Horace Walpole to Bentley. "Walpole Letters." Vol. iii. p. 150.

Milton than a study from the antique. His odes from the Norse tongue and Welsh are less to our taste; nevertheless, they boast a sort of barbarous grandeur and rude sublimity, which cannot but recommend them to the admirers of the wild and the wonderful.

These poems were greatly admired by Horace Walpole, who got them illustrated by a clever artist. "Our charming Mr. Bentley," he writes, "is doing Gray as much more honour as he deserves than Spenser. He is drawing vignettes for his odes; what a valuable MS. I shall have!" If these vignettes were, however, in the style of those Mr. Bentley made to Mr. Walpole's George II, they could not have greatly increased the value of the manuscript. In another place, he says: "Mr. Bentley is with me, finishing the drawings for Gray's odes; there are some Mandarin cats fishing for gold-fish which will delight you."†

We must not forget to add that the muse of Gray could sometimes be playful as well as profound: witness his ode "On the Death of a Favourite Cat," and his "Long Story." These prove that his mind could very readily throw off that tender melancholy and tragic grandeur which produced such noble images in the more perfect of his productions.

If poets only were allowed to pronounce sentence on poets, we are afraid the public would often endea-

* "Walpole's Letters." Vol. ii. p. 391.

† Ibid. Vol. ii. p. 425.

vour to apply to a higher court for a new trial, on the ground of misdirection of the judge, or on the verdict being against the evidence ; and this will be the case even when very high powers and capabilities are found in the judgment seat. Gray, tried by the intellect of Goldsmith, might be expected to meet with "at least justice ;" nevertheless, the summing up of the latter partakes equally of depreciation and praise.

Goldsmith, writing in the "Monthly Review" a critique on Gray's Odes, says :

"We cannot without regret behold talents so capable of giving pleasure to all, exerted in efforts that at least can amuse only the few."

Gray did not write his odes to amuse, he wrote to elevate ; and it would take the powers of calculation of a Babbage to enumerate the vast body over which this effect has been exercised since their publication.

"How unsuited to our national character," continues the rival poet, "is that species of poetry which rises upon us with unexpected flights; where we must hastily catch the thought or it flies from us, and the reader must largely partake of the poet's enthusiasm in order to taste his beauties. Mr. Gray's 'Odes,' it may be confessed, breathe much of the spirit of Pindar; but they have also caught the seeming obscurity, the sudden transition, and hazardous epithets of his mighty master; all which, though intended for beauties, will probably be regarded as blemishes by the generality of his readers. In short, they are in some measure a representation of what Pindar now appears to be, though not what he appeared to the states of Greece, when they rivalled each other in his applause, and when Pan himself was seen dancing to his melody."

Although a critic of considerable reputation has

averred that "than this nothing happier could be said,"* we can regard it only as the impression of a mind so completely devoted to the natural, as to be almost insensible to the ideal. Goldsmith's poetry was of the "pure well of English undefiled," and he looked upon the classic spirit of the compositions that had been brought under his notice, as something altogether alien to his imagination. Under this prejudice, he could only appraise Gray's Odes as Pindar at second hand. Gray was much more generous in his appreciation of Goldsmith, for when "The Deserted Village" was read to him, he exclaimed, "That man is a poet." Goldsmith was much more likely to appreciate the "Elegy," and did appreciate that exquisite poem at its highest value. There was a feeling in the reflections in a country churchyard, that might claim very near kindred with those of the Deserted Village, which was not published till 1770. But differing in all its characteristics, as did the "Odes" to the "Elegy," Goldsmith could not close his mind to their strong claims upon his attention, and refers to passages from "The Bard" as equalling "anything of that species of composition which has hitherto appeared in our language, the Odes of Dryden himself not excepted."

Mr. John Forster, in his popular biography of Goldsmith, endeavours to account for Walpole's parti-

* John Forster's "Life and Adventures of Oliver Goldsmith." Page 98.

ality for Gray, by affirming that the latter was master of some secrets of their earlier life, that a little affected his friend, and that there was that real indifference to popular influences in the poet, which the wit and fine gentleman was anxious to have credit for.* This is surely too hard upon the wit and fine gentleman. Walpole's fondness for his favourite school-fellow was based on a much sounder foundation: he loved him from the depths of a heart, which though too often under the influence of worldly affectations, could upon occasion open itself to the kindest and sweetest sympathies of human nature. He admired his genius with the interest of a brother, and the zeal of an enthusiast. His appreciation of Gray's poetry was far in advance of his warmest admirers; and notwithstanding the qualified praise of Mr. Forster, we believe in the soundness both of Walpole's judgment and his friendship.

At the time when the Rev. Norton Nicholls, L.L.B. became a Student in Trinity Hall, the University was the chosen residence of Gray:

> "A si gran nome sorga
> Tutto il coro à inchinarsi del Parnaso."

It was natural to feel gratified in being a member of the same learned society with so distinguished a man and natural to desire his notice. By the intervention of a common friend, Mr. Nicholls, when between

* "Life and Adventures of Oliver Goldsmith." A biography in four books. By John Forster. Page 94. 1848.

eighteen and nineteen years of age, was introduced to Gray. In a select company, in the course of conversation, the former, who while familiar with the Roman and Greek, was also well acquainted with the Italian Classics, ventured to illustrate a remark with a quotation from Dante; the illustration was apt, and Gray was so well pleased with it, as well as with the manners of the young scholar, that he addressed himself almost exclusively to him the entire evening, and at parting, invited him to his rooms at Pembroke Hall. A lasting friendship was the result, and the poet from that time forth showed the warmest interest for the welfare of Mr. Nicholls, who often profitted by his advice.*

Preserved amongst the works of Gray we find what his Editor has styled "an unfinished tragedy"—if that can be called unfinished which is but barely commenced—the first scene of the first act, and a dozen lines of the second, constituting the whole of the tragedy in question. The title is "Agrippina," and the story is taken from the 13th and 14th Books of the Annals of Tacitus—a somewhat revolting subject to a mind of such delicacy, and this doubtless was the cause of its having been so soon discontinued. The author of the Elegy could find no gratification in delineating such depraved wretches as Nero and Poppœa. Parricide and adultery he probably thought

* Nichols' "Illustrations of Literature of the 18th Century." Vol. v. p. 66.

were not the elements of high tragic interest. It is not strange then that he should have abandoned the subject on the threshold.

Yet the little he attempted shows that he was at least capable of writing vigorous blank verse. The dialogue between Agrippina and Aceronia possesses more of the characteristics of the Greek school of dramatic writing than of the English. The subject however was one better suited to the terrible powers of an Æschylus, than the amiable feelings of a Gray. The indignation of the outraged mother was more than sufficient for him; even here he appears to have been labouring up hill. A grand array of terrible menaces closes the scene. Agrippina hastily replies to the suggestions of her attendant to remove from a spot so full of danger to her.

"Yes, I will be gone,
But not to Antium—all shall be confessed,
Whate'er the frivolous tongues of giddy fame
Has spread among the crowd; things that but whispered
Have arched the hearer's brow, and rivetted
His eyes in fearful ecstacy; no matter
What; so't be strange and dreadful—sorceries,
Assassinations, poisonings—the deeper
My guilt, the blacker his ingratitude.
And you, ye manes of ambition's victims,
Enshrined Claudius, with the pitied ghosts
Of the Syllavi, doomed to early death;—
Ye unavailing horrors—fruitless crimes—
If from the realms of night my voice ye hear,
In lieu of penitence and vain remorse,
Accept my vengeance. Though by me ye bled
He was the cause. My love, my fears for him

Dried the soft springs of pity in my heart,
And froze them up with deadly cruelty.
Yet if your injured shades demand my fate,
If murder cries for murder—blood for blood,
Let me fall alone; but crush his pride
And sink the traitor in his mother's ruin."

We come now to an "unfinished" performance of another kind—like the tragedy abruptly left by the poet, almost as soon as he commenced it. This is called "Fragment of an Ethical Essay." So to speak, the works of this writer come before us, like some newly discovered remains of one of the ablest of the Greek sculptors. Here a torso—there a frieze—a well-preserved bas-relief—an unfinished bust, and a headless figure. All more or less fragmentary; and all more or less eloquent of that classical spirit, which gave to the least fragment the same kind of interest as to the most finished production.

In the Essay, the author's subject is stated to be "The necessary Alliance between a good form of Government and a good mode of Education, in order to produce the happiness of Mankind." A good subject—and, we are bound to say—if we can judge of the unbuilt structure by the bricks laid for the foundation—it was in able hands. The fragment may boast of many admirable lines—highly polished, elegantly expressed—concentrated yet graceful, euphonious yet full of energy. The following passage is particularly worthy of notice.

"What seasons can control
What fancied zone can circumscribe the soul,
Who, conscious of the source from whence she springs
By Reason's light, on Resolution's wings,
Spite of her frail companion, dauntless goes
O'er Lybia's deserts, and through Zembla's snows?
She bids each slumbering energy awake,
Another touch, another temper take,
Suspends the inferior laws that rule our clay,
The stubborn elements confess her sway;
Their little wants, their low desires refine,
And raise the mortal to a height divine."

These lines prove that "Pope's Essay on Man," might have had a metrical rival in "Gray's Essay on Education," had the latter been completed in the spirit with which it was commenced.

The studies of the poet were now becoming more grave and more comprehensive. The cultivation of the imagination was suspended for that of the judgment. In the quiet retreat he had selected within the walls of his college, he seems to have set himself tasks much better adapted to the patient assiduity of the antiquary, than the lively fancy of the poet. But his antiquarian knowledge was as profound as it was extensive—and his learning generally embraced a much wider field than we can find any trace of in his poems. Of one branch of antiquities, heraldry, Gray appears to have entertained much the same opinion as Lord Chesterfield, who, on one occasion, exclaimed to the Garter King-at-Arms:—"You foolish man, you do not know

your own foolish business." Horace Walpole writes in September, 1749 :—

"You know how out of humour Gray has been about our diverting ourselves with pedigrees, which is at least as wise as making a serious point of haranguing against the study. I believe neither Mr. Chute nor I ever contracted a moment's vanity from any of our discoveries; or ever preferred them to anything but brag and whist. Well, Gray has set himself to compute and has found out that there must go a million of ancestors in twenty generations to every body's composition."*

Gray's favourite pursuit was the study of Greek history, which was but another manifestation of his earliest classical predilections; but instead of singing the fame of the gods and heroes of Greece in harmonious odes, his enthusiasm displayed itself in the endless drudgery of a chronology. This laborious task commences with the thirtieth Olympiad, and he had the perseverance to carry it on to the one hundred and thirteenth, a period of three hundred and thirty-two years, with a most methodical arrangement of nine columns in every page—each of which having its proper subject—one being for the Olympiad, another for the archons, a third for the public affairs of Greece, the fourth, fifth, and sixth for the philosophers, and the seventh, eighth, and ninth for poets, historians, and orators.

Gibbon asks "Why did not Gray, instead of compiling tables of chronology and natural history, apply the powers of his genius to finish the philosophical poem, of which he has left such an exquisite

* "Walpole Letters." Vol. ii. p. 305.

specimen ?" The question, truly, is difficult to answer. The most active spirits have sometimes suddenly determined to spend the rest of their days in the cell of a recluse, engaged in labours as unattractive as irrational. The author of our incomparable elegy chose in a similar manner to bury himself in his college, and to pass his time in what to so highly poetical a mind, must needs have proved a serious penance. Like so many other things from the same gifted hand, the chronology is unfinished.

" In the year 1768, Gray received a letter from the Duke of Grafton, by the King's command, offering him the professorship of modern history in the university, which happened at that moment to be vacant. Speaking of his good fortune, the poet says:—

"It is the best thing the Crown has to bestow (on a layman) here; the salary is 400*l.* per annum; but what enhances the value of it to me is, that it was bestowed without being asked. Instances of a benefit so nobly conferred, I believe are rare; and therefore I tell you of it, as a thing that does honour, not only to me, but to the Minister."*

Gray did not exclusively devote himself to classical history, as has been stated in the question by the author of the "Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire:" he was ardent and patient as a student of natural history, particularly in zoology and botany, and he made use of his investigations in both sciences, in annotation of Aristotle and other ancient historians of nature, with whose works he had made himself familiar. Another of his favourite studies was archi-

* "Gray's Works." Vol. iv. p. 127.

tectural antiquities. Indeed so various were his acquirements that we hardly know what were their limits.

"It is no longer a premature announcement," observes an able critic, "that a systematical selection of notes from the critics, including the more important critical tracts at length, may be shortly looked for in two volumes; and that 'Gray's Notes on Plato' will be separately published, with a continuation and additions. With regard to these last, a casual expression of Dr. Parr's, 'They are so free from affectation that I might have written them myself,' is usually retailed with sundry comments on the Doctor's egotism. It is more likely that the words were prompted rather by '*ars est celare artem*' than by an emotion of personal vanity; that he thought solely of Gray, meaning that, profound as the notes in question are, they are so perfectly simple that the reader might suppose them spontaneous effusions of his own, committed to paper at a former period."*

This is high praise, but praise as honourable to its source as to its object. The eulogy has been exceeded by one who was equally capable of doing justice to the subject. Speaking of this distinguished writer, another of his admirers observes :—

"Perhaps Gray was the most learned man in Europe. He was equally acquainted with the elegant and profound parts of science, and that not superficially, but thoroughly. He knew every branch of history, both natural and civil, had read all the original historians of England, France, and Italy, and was a great antiquarian. Criticism, metaphysics, morals, politics, made a principal part of his plan of study: voyages and travels of all sorts were his favourite amusement; and he had a fine taste in painting, prints, architecture, and gardening. With such a fund of knowledge, his conversation must have been equally instructing and entertaining: but he was also a good man, a well-bred man, a man of virtue and humanity."

* "Stemmata Athenensia," 4to, 1807. By F. M. Page 7.

This moral excellence is the golden frame-work within which the poet's intellectual merits are rendered a thousand times more conspicuous; and, let it be added, they are made infinitely more useful to the community, and more honourable to himself. Though moral goodness is a dignity which under some circumstances appears to have been acquired without what is usually called learning, it is in reality the highest species of intelligence; for to practise what is worthiest is to know what is best, and he who acts most worthily, has nothing to learn. True greatness can never be independent of the intellect. Alexander the Great derives more real fame from the instruction of Aristotle than from the conquest of the world. Gray's goodness of heart in conjunction with his greatness of mind as much dignified the scholar as it adorned the man: and the union constitutes the only true philosophy.

"There is no character without some speck," continues the writer from whom we last quoted, "some imperfection; and I think the greatest defect in his was an affectation in delicacy, or rather effeminacy, and a visible fastidiousness, or contempt and disdain of his inferiors in science. He also had, in some degree, that weakness which disgusted Voltaire so much in Mr. Congreve: though his mind was enlarged, his heart softened, his virtue strengthened; the world and mankind were shown to him without a mask, and he was taught to consider everything as trifling and unworthy of the attention of a wise man, except the pursuit of knowledge; and the practice of virtue in that state wherein God hath placed us."*

The "greatest defect" alluded to by his reverend

* Rev. Mr. Temple, Rector of St. Gluvias, Cornwall. "London Magazine, 1772."

friend is the natural result of sedentary habits carried to the extent they were by this scholastic recluse. Men who devote themselves exclusively to a pursuit, even if it be somewhat trifling in its character, become so prejudiced in its favour as to consider every other insignificant in comparison, while all their ideas shape themselves after the type set before them as the one object of their study. But though Gray may not have held individuals less learned than himself in much estimation, there is no evidence to show that he held them in disdain. That he was fastidious—somewhat over-nice in his treatment of his subject—is more clear. This defect, however, if defect it be, does not arise from affectation. It is the natural feature of an intellect in the highest state of refinement. He laboured to satisfy his own highly cultivated taste. On this point it is impossible to read without a smile the following specimen of critical nonsense.

"When the taste has been almost exclusively cultivated, the character will be without energy, and its most prominent feature will be that delicacy of feeling against which Mr. Hume has entered so just a protest. Gray, stripped of his genius is a tolerably fair model of a man of mere taste, and nothing can be well imagined less desirable than Gray's sickly constitution of mind. Nothing, I think, affords a more lively representation of intellect, thus puny and passive, than those masses of animated jelly which one sees at times scattered along the sea shore without bone or tendon, that quiver to every blast and shrink at every touch."*

The mind of the author of the stirring odes so frequently referred to, was the very opposite of puny or

* "Beddoes on Demonstrative Evidence." Page 123. 1793. 8vo.

passive, and the illustration which concludes the last paragraph is likely to have been much more characteristic of the intellect of the person who used it, than that which could grasp so many branches of knowledge. But it requires a kindred taste thoroughly to appreciate the exquisite finish of Gray's poetical productions; and to estimate his acquirements, demands a course of study a vast deal too comprehensive for the easily satisfied intellect of the great mass of modern readers and writers.

We will quote from another obscure authority, but we do so to corroborate the ideas we have already expressed of the extent and depth of his studies.

"Not to mention the useless jargon of the schools, grown so justly offensive to the public ear, the barbarism of its scientific terms proves in the present age, at least in the fashionable world, rather unfriendly to the Linnæan system. This naturalists confess. The late Mr. Gray whose musical parts were so delicate and correct, was so struck with this deformity in a system, in other respects so worthy of admiration, as to have attempted to make the German Latin of Linnæus purely classical—a task which perhaps Gray alone was able to perform."*

Here is true refinement, not fastidiousness: a classical taste, not "a sickly constitution of mind." The fact is, Gray was in no slight degree in advance of his age; the majority of his contemporaries delighted in a coarser material than he would attempt to manufacture—they preferred whatever demanded the least amount of thought for its appreciation. Criticism, too, was at the period, a branch of literature, the least

* "Essay on the History of Mankind," by James Dunbar, L.L.D. 1780. Page 117.

cultivated of any. There certainly then existed one of the profoundest of critics in the person of Dr. Bentley, but his labours in the Boyle Controversy prove how rare was the art by which he so completely silenced his antagonists.

Gray excelled in infusing into a translation the spirit of the original, and in his Odes from the Norse tongue, in particular, the fidelity of his paraphrase has been vouched for in a manner as curious as it is interesting.

"Here, according to his locality," observes an eminent critic, "the Caithness man witnessed the vision in which was introduced the song translated by Gray, under the title of 'The Fatal Sisters.' On this subject Mr. Baikie told me the following remarkable circumstance—A clergyman told him that while some remnants of the Norse were yet spoken in North Ronaldsha, he carried thither the translation of Mr. Gray, then newly published, and read it to some of the old people, as referring to the ancient history of their island; but so soon as he had proceeded a little way, they exclaimed, they knew it very well in the original, and had often sung it to himself when he asked them for an old Norse song. They called it the Enchantresses."*

A satisfactory version of those wild and barbaric snatches of song, must have been among the most difficult of the translator's poetical labours. The mind, however, that produced "The Bard," was of close kindred with that to which we owe "The Descent of Odin."

However inadequately appreciated, Gray was not without admirers in his own day, and notwith-

* "Lockhart's Life of Scott," Vol. iii. p. 190. From Sir Walter's Diary, on board the "Lighthouse" Yacht, Aug, 14th, 1814.

standing that his reserve and recluse habits tended to keep them at a distance, there were some as enthusiastic as the most ambitious poet could desire. In his collegiate retreat he did all that was possible to shun observation, yet his solitary walks were not unfrequently crossed by earnest worshippers who could not restrain themselves from intruding upon the privacy of the author of the immortal "Elegy," that they might boast of being in the presence of so great a man.* A visit to Cambridge was robbed of its chief attraction if it failed to procure the curious visitor a passing view of the popular poet. His writings though few, had diffused abroad a feeling for the beautiful, as earnest as it was profound, and wherever there was a mind educated to a proper appreciation of what was classical in poetry, there was sure to be an ardent admirer of the genius of Gray.

His most celebrated contemporaries were amongst his warmest friends. Walpole boasted of him as *his* Gray: Warburton publicly and heartily admired and praised him. He had the respect of Hurd: the cordial approbation of Beattie, of Adam Smith, and Mason—in short, of every one capable of estimating the merits of his exquisite vein of poetry.

Adam Smith said of him, "Gray joins to the sublimity of Milton the eloquence and harmony of Pope, and nothing is wanting to render him, perhaps, the first poet in the English language, but to have written a little more." Mason's lines are well-known,—

* "Gentleman's Magazine," Sept., 1839. Page 226.

"No more the Grecian muse unrivalled reigns,
To Britain let the nations homage pay;
She sees a Homer's fire in Milton's strains,
A Pindar's rapture in the lyre of Gray."

A detailed notice of his writings, in a spirit very unworthy of them, has appeared in a periodical emanating from the University on which his genius conferred so much honour.* We have already noticed the hypercritical analysis of the "Elegy," in a magazine to which we should more willingly refer as an authority in archæology than in poetry—it is but justice to say, that we have seen some notices of the poet in this respectable publication written in a wiser and kinder spirit.† Mathias, a man of superior taste and scholarship, has written an Essay on Gray, which may be referred to with advantage.

The life of Gray was too short for the development of a genius so comprehensive: and his sedentary habits, no doubt, were partly the cause of its early termination. He kept up his school-friendships with many of his Eton contemporaries, particularly with Cole and Walpole, and we are indebted to the former for the interesting account of the poet's dissolution, which is now laid before the reader from his unpublished letters:

REV. WM. COLE TO THE HON. HORACE WALPOLE.

"Dear Sir, "Milton, Wednesday, August 21, 1771.

"Poor Mr. Gray had been complaining some time of the gout

* "Cambridge Portfolio." No. 11. 4to. 1839.

† See an able Review of the "Cambridge Portfolio" in the "Gentleman's Magazine" for September 1839.

flying about him, but had been much out of order with it in his stomach for a week, or thereabouts, before his death. I heard nothing of his being ill till the morning of the day he died, when Mr. Essex, in his way to Ely, called on me to acquaint me with it, and of his danger. In the evening I sent my servant to Cambridge to know how he was: but he was then dying, and no messages could be delivered. This was on Tuesday, July 30th, and he died that evening, about seven or eight o'clock. He desired to be buried very early in the morning, at Stoke-Pogis; so he was enclosed in a leaden coffin, and on the Sunday morning following was carried in a hearse from College, which was to lie at Hodsdon that night, and the next at Salt Hill, in order to be near Stoke the next morning.

"He made the new Master of Pembroke Hall, his particular friend, (Mr. Browne) his executor, who attended him to the grave, with a cousin who lives at Cambridge, (Miss Antrobus) and a young gentleman of Christ's College, with whom he was very intimate, but whose name I am ignorant of; these, with the husband of another Miss Antrobus, attended the hearse to Stoke.

"What fortune he has left behind him, he has divided between these two ladies: how much that is, I know not. At first it was reported 8000*l.* between them; it is since much lessened, and, indeed, I suppose it hardly possible for him to have saved so much. His Books and MSS. are all left by him to his friend Mr. Mason, with a discretionary power to print or not as he pleases.

"Some few days before his death he sent an express to Mr. Stonehewer, whom I suppose you know, to beg he would come down to Cambridge: as Dr. Gisburne was accidentally with him when the messenger arrived, he prevailed with that physician to go down with him; this was the more necessary as the Professor here had been sent to, and because it was in the night, refused to attend. But it was too late for advice; and all that could be done was to make his exit as easy as possible.

"There is a circumstance, though I have scarce time, which I must relate to you, as it appeared striking to me. The last time I saw him was at the funeral of Dr. Long, the late Master of Pembroke.

You wrote to me next day, with a desire I would mention something to Mr. Gray, which I forgot. However, I sent my servant with your letter, and in mine, by way of joke, took notice to him of some indecencies and slovenliness I thought I observed in the solemnity for so good a master and benefactor. His answer was in jest also,—that they knew no better, having had no funeral in their chapel in any one's rememberance; that when the next happened, they would apply to me for my advice, "which," however, said he, "I hope won't yet be these forty years." Poor man, I little thought then his would be the next, and so soon too!

I can write no more for time, and will be glad, very glad to hear of your safe arrival to England, and shall then wait with impatience to hear from you. The circle of one's nearest and dearest friends draws every day smaller and smaller. I have a nice plan for the gardens of Lord Ossory, which Mr. Essex drew out just when you set out for Paris, and which I will send to you on your arrival. In the meantime pray God give you a safe and happy voyage.

"And I am, Sir,

"A most obliged and faithful servant,

"WM. COLE."*

Three days later Walpole's correspondent resumes the interesting subject:—

REV. WM. COLE TO THE HON. HORACE WALPOLE.

"Dear Sir, "Milton, Saturday, August 24, 1771.

"Not being satisfied with my late answer to your letter from Paris, I drank my tea yesterday with the Master of Pembroke, that I might from the fountain head give you a more authentic account of the subject of your letter, which I gave him to peruse. He was very obliging and communicative; showed me Mr. Gray's will, executed July 2, 1770, in which, after desiring to be put into a coffin of well-seasoned oak, without lining either within or withoutside, and to be buried in a vault contiguous to his dear mother, in the churchyard of Stoke Pogis, and attended to his grave by one of his executors, if any ways convenient; he leaves

* MS.

five hundred pounds to Mr. Stonehewer, the like to the Master of Pembroke, and the same sum to Mr. Mason, Precentor of York; to whom he also leaves all his books, MSS., coins, medals, music-books, both printed and MS., with a discretionary power to do with his papers what he thinks proper. To his two cousins Antrobus, of Cambridge, as well as I can recollect, he leaves one thousand pounds, and to his servant fifty pounds. These, I think, the most considerable legacies; and as far as I can judge, he died worth about six thousand pounds, having sold his paternal property, not being made for tenants and repairs, placing the money in the funds, and with part buying an annuity, as I was informed, in order to have a fuller income. The Master and Mr. Mason are left residuary legatees; the latter was lately at Cambridge, and, as the Master told me, talked with him about the propriety of sending you an account of the affair, as the long friendship between you and Mr. Gray seemed to require it; but as Mr. Mason was acquainted with you, the Master put it upon him to do so; but he added, that when Mr. Mason left Cambridge, where this business took up all his thoughts and time, he went to his residence at York, where the hurrying time of the races were beginning, and where Lord John Cavendish was to take up his lodgings with him; so that he doubted whether he had yet wrote to you, from his multiplicity of business; but made not the least doubt but you would soon hear from him; and on my expressing a desire that he should be acquainted with the contents of your truly affecting letter, he promised to mention the purport of it in his first letter to him, which would be soon.

"All his furniture he divided between his cousins here, who, on the Master's representation, sent back a pianoforte, which had been given to him by Mr. Stonehewer; but, as the Master said, Mr. Gray had accepted of it reluctantly, not liking to put his friend to such an expense, he thought it right that Mr. Stonehewer should have it again. On the same principle, Mr. Mason designs to return an antique seal, representing the figure of Justice, which was forced upon him by Mr. Bedingfield, a brother of the baronet, and a great admirer of Mr. Gray, who had been delicately scru-

pulous in receiving it, and knew not how to refuse it with good manners.

"By a memorandum the Master lately found, it appears that he was near fifty-five years of age, being born Dec. 26, 1716. He went off pretty easily, considering the nature of his disorder, the gout in his stomach, which occasioned a sickness and loss of appetite; neither would anything stay in his stomach; he complained also for want of proper evacuations; and it was not till the Friday before he died that he had any convulsions; at which time he was seized with the first, and then had them occasionally till his death on the Tuesday night following, though not to any great degree; the Master sitting with him till within half-an-hour of his exit.

"He retained the use of his senses to the last, but gave proof of their decay a day or two before his death, which was not unexpected, as he told his cousin, 'Molly, I shall die!' The decay I mentioned was this: seeing the master sitting by him, he said 'Oh Sir, let Dr. Hallifax or Dr. Heberden be sent to.' He certainly meant for physical assistance; now Dr. Hallifax, the King's Professor of Law, and his acquaintance, is a Divine, and no Physician. He gave another proof, some few days before his death, of his apprehensions of it; for being on his couch when Professor Plumptre and Dr. Glynn were consulting about him in the room, giving the Master the keys of his bureau, he told him where to find his purse and to bring him some gold to fee the Physicians, which he did with his own hands, and very cheerfully asked them, 'Well Gentlemen, what must this complaint of mine be called after all?' 'Certainly' answered the Professor, 'the gout in the stomach; but however,' added he, 'don't be uneasy—as we make no doubt to drive it thence.' When he told the Master where to find the purse, he said, 'and Master, if there should be any occasion for it, you will find something else in the same drawer,' meaning his Will: which was all he said on the melancholy subject.

"I have been thus minute and particular, as I guess you would like to know the most trifling circumstances and features, that out of the whole a more striking likeness may be formed.

"As it was warm weather, and the distance considerable, it was

impossible to comply with that part of his Will, relating to his coffin, which was wrapped in lead.

"Mr. Tyson seeing me pass by, in Free School Lane, in my way yesterday to Pembroke, called to me out of the window, begging me to come into his chamber to look at a drawing he had just finished of Mr. Gray; which I have a notion he intends either to send to you, or if he etches it, to inscribe to you, for I did not well understand him. It is very like him; but I think not more so than the etching by Mr. Mason, which, no doubt, you have, and which he would persuade me is very unlike, though in my opinion, his own is copied from it."*

Thus passed away one of those genuine scholars who live to study rather than study to live. A great loss, at all times, to the world, is an intelligence of so high an order, which never graces it but at long intervals, and is never half appreciated till the overworked frame has long mingled with the dust from which it sprung. Mediocrities achieve great reputations—they are ever before the public, and the public are simple enough to imagine that names so often put forward must be legitimate objects of popularity. Consequently they pass unnoticed a Gray, whilst the Sternhold and Hopkins of the hour become household deities. But justice has been done to the Cambridge recluse, while herds of versifiers, who had in his lifetime successfully elbowed him back and thrust themselves before him, have sunk into complete oblivion.

The Master of Pembroke Hall, on receiving a communication, through Mr. Cole, to the effect that Horace Walpole proposed presenting him a copy of

* MS.

his portrait of Gray, returned the following reply to Mr. Cole:—

"Mr. Browne presents his respectful compliments, and wishes to hear a better account of Mr. Cole's health. He desires the favour of Mr. Cole to express in his name to Mr. Walpole, his best thanks for the intention Mr. Walpole entertains of giving him a copy of the picture of Mr. Gray. He will be very glad of preserving such a memorial of Mr. Gray before his eyes as long as he lives, and at his death, will leave it to the College. He trusts the Society will be ever sensible, how honourable to the College was Mr. Gray's relation to it, and that they will think Mr. Walpole's present one of their best ornaments. Pembroke Hall, Sept. 15th. 1771."*

A portrait of Gray was of considerable value, on account of his disinclination to have his likeness taken. Horace Walpole persuaded him to sit to a painter, that he might possess such a memorial of his distinguished friend, and with some difficulty overcame his objections. Great was the eagerness with which his admirers sought either for portraits or engravings of Gray, after his decease; and more than one print was published to satisfy their interest and curiosity. But their great source of interest was the memoir of the poet which it became known his friend Mason was preparing for publication. It was published at last, and among others to whom it was most welcome, was his schoolfellow Cole, who thus writes to their mutual friend Walpole, after he had perused it:—

"No doubt Mr. Mason has sent you Mr. Gray's Life. I purchased it and was sorry to get to the end of it; yet methinks there are some particular circumstances that are omitted which would have done no discredit to the subject. Why he omits Mr. Gray's

* M.S.

great benefaction to himself, is rather singular; that a person, whom he represents throughout as in very strait circumstances, should yet be able to bequeath to him, to the amount of one thousand five hundred or two thousand pounds, without doing injustice to his own relations, with several other friendly benefactions, would have done credit to his friend's character, though it might have contradicted his insinuations of poverty, which was never the fact; two hundred pounds per annum which Mr. Gray was always, I believe, in possession of, was surely more than enough to exempt him from that assertion. Mr. Mason had five hundred pounds, all his vast collection of books, two or three rooms full over his apartment, all his medals, MSS., musical instruments, and music, &c., was a great benefaction to Mr. Mason, who just hints in one place, that his books were bequeathed to him. Why could he not tell us where he was buried? and several other particulars, which a curious person is always pleased to be acquainted with. But great geniuses must be singular, and not go on in the beaten tract: however, altogether, it has amused me much, and impressed an higher idea of Mr Gray's worth, abilities, and humanity, than I was aware of, though so long acquainted with him."*

Walpole seems to have received the book in a different spirit—he was too much interested in the subject to find fault, and thus expresses himself in reply :—

"I intended writing to you on Gray's life, if you had not prevented me. I am charmed with it, and prefer it to all the biography I ever saw. The style is excellent, simple, and unaffected; the method admirable, artful, and judicious. He has *framed* the fragments, as a person said, so well, that they are fine drawings, if not finished pictures. For my part I am so interested in it, that I shall certainly read it over and over."†

Walpole entered into other particulars in defence

* MS. April 9th, 1775.

† "Walpole's Letters." Vol. v. p. 413.

of the biographer, who he thought had done his duty with skill and judgment: and excuses the omissions which had so strongly excited Cole's indignation. It is curious to observe, by his reverend friend's reply, how readily the latter submitted to his judgment—he backs out of all his objections with equal rapidity and good humour, stigmatises his own opinion as absurd, and is willing to take that of the Lord of Strawberry Hill, without the slightest reservation: but this was eminently characteristic of the antiquarian. He looked up to Walpole with a reverential respect, and would no more have thought of opposing his 'decision'—(unless perhaps in political matters, in which he assumed some independence)—than of contradicting any of the thirty-nine articles.

"Although your last favour," he writes, "is a complete censure and refutation of my absurd opinion, relating to the execution of some part of Mr. Gray's life, it is yet so just, so able, so demonstrative, that one must be obstinate beyond measure, not to be convinced. I assure you I am thoroughly: and though I may retain the vulgar prejudices of antiquarianism in wishing to see minutiæ and things not worthy public notice—having been all my lifetime collecting such scraps—yet your most sensible stricture on that part of the letter, as well as respecting Mr. Mason's gratitude, is set in a light so convincing and full, that a man must be lost to all sense and feeling, not to subscribe to it. I find the University people much divided about it; the Seniors think his Reflections on their method of Education, his unnecessary sarcasm on poor Dr. Waterland, and general disgust at a place he chose for his constant residence, might as well have been omitted; but all concur in admiring his poetry, descriptions, and letters. I am surprised at what you mention relating to the slow sale in London: in Cambridge, above a fortnight ago, Mr. Woodyer had sold forty copies, and Merrill as many,

and had they more, could have disposed of them; and I am told that a new edition is already at the press,—this looks as if the first impression was all vended."*

A characteristic portrait we introduce here, from the poet's own pen, as contained in one of his inimitable letters:—

"As I am recommending myself to your love, methinks I ought to send you my picture (for I am no more what I was, some circumstances excepted, which I hope I need not particularize to you); you must add then to your former idea, two years of age, a reasonable quantity of dullness, a great deal of silence, and something that rather resembles, than is, thinking; a confused notion of many strange and fine things that have swam before my eyes for some time, a want of love for general society, indeed, an inability to it. On the good side you may add a sensibility for what others feel, and indulgence for their faults and weaknesses, a love of truth, and detestation of everything else. Then you are to deduct a little impertinence, a little laughter, a great deal of pride, and some spirits. These are all the alterations I know of—you perhaps may find more.

"Think not that I have been obliged for this reformation of manners to reason or reflection, but to a severer schoolmistress, Experience. One has little merit in learning her lessons, for one cannot help it; but they are more useful than others, and imprint themselves in the very heart."*

Johnson was no admirer of Gray's letters—they did not approach his imposing scholastic style, therefore he failed to appreciate them. Sir James Mackintosh pronounces them an imitation of Madame de Sevigné in a collegiate spirit; and Cowper rated very low the later portion of the series. Another authority,

* MS. April 18, 1775.

* Letter to West. "Life of Gray."

who possessed considerable influence in his day, says of them :—

"Gray's letters very much resemble what his conversation was. He had none of the airs of either a scholar or a poet; and though on those and all other subjects he spoke to me with the utmost freedom, and without any reserve, he was in general company much more silent than one could have wished."*

This want of sociality was a general complaint against him. Even his old friend, Horace Walpole, could not help joining his voice to the rest :—

"I agree with you most absolutely," he writes, "in your opinion about Gray; he is the worst company in the world. From a melancholy turn, from his living reclusely, and from a little too much dignity, he never converses easily; all his words are measured and chosen, and formed into sentences: his writings are admirable; he himself is not agreeable."†

Poor Gray! he possessed too many thoughts to have many words—a very common case with the studious and intellectual.

Of the fidelity of the prints that were published of him we are enabled to judge by the opinions of those amongst his friends who knew him best :—

"Pray," writes Cole, "are you satisfied with Mr. Gray's print? I am by no means. It gives him a sharpness, a snappishness, a fierceness that was not his common feature, though it might occasionally be so. The little etching of him by Mr. Mason, since copied by Henshaw, conveys a much stronger idea of him to me."‡

"The print, I agree with you," replies Walpole, "though like, is a very disagreeable likeness of him. It gives the primness he

* Forbes' "Life of Beattie."

† "Walpole Letters." Vol. ii. p. 240.

‡ M.S. April 18, 1775.

had when under restraint, and there is a blackness in the countenance which was like him only the last time I ever saw him, when I was much struck with it, and though I did not apprehend him in danger, it left an impression on me that was uneasy, and almost prophetic of what I heard but too soon after leaving him. Wilson drew the picture under much such impression, and I could not bear it in my room: Mr. Mason altered it a little, but still it is not well, nor gives any idea of the determined virtues of his heart. It just serves to help the reader to an image of the person whose genius and integrity they must admire, if they are so happy as to have a taste for either."*

Gray, judging from his portrait by Echardt, lately at Strawberry Hill, was eminently the poet and the scholar in his appearance. A delicate frame, a pale complexion, an expansive forehead, clear eyes, a small mouth, and regular features, bearing the general impression of thoughtfulness and melancholy, surrounded by his own hair, worn long, prepossessed the spectator in his favour, and charmed those who were already his admirers.† This portrait Dodsley desired to see affixed to the quarto edition of his "Odes," in the publication of which Horace Walpole evinced much interest; but the design came to the ears of the poet, and nothing could exceed the state of excitement into which it threw him. To a man of his extreme modesty and excessive reserve such an exhibition of himself was most offensive. He writes to his schoolfellow:—

"Sure you are not out of your wits? This I know, if you suffer

* "Walpole Letters" Vol. v. p. 417.

† "Gray's Works." Vol. iii. p. 106.

my head to be printed, you will put me out of mine. I conjure you immediately to put a stop to any such design. Who is at the expense of engraving it I know not, but if it be Dodsley, I will make up the loss to him. The thing as it was, I know, will make me ridiculous enough; but to appear in proper person at the head of my works, consisting of half-a-dozen ballads in thirty pages, would be worse than the pillory. I do assure you, if I had received such a book, with such a frontispiece, without any warning, I do believe it would have given me the palsy."*

Walpole was obliged to write immediately to pacify him.† The idea of giving an engraved portrait was abandoned. The book came out with Bentley's illustrations only.

* Some writers accuse him of being somewhat finical in his appearance, and the following stanza is said to have been suppressed from Beattie's "Minstrel," in consequence of alluding too freely to this foible:—

"Fret not thyself, thou man of modern song,
Nor violate the plaster of thine hair;
Nor to that dainty coat do ought of wrong;
Else how mayest thou to Cæsar's hall repair,
For sure no damaged coat may enter there."

"Gentleman's Magazine," Dec., 1837. Page 565.

† "Walpole Letters." Vol. ii. p. 463.

CHAPTER V.

WALPOLE, AS AUTHOR, PRINTER, AND PUBLISHER.

EARLY in the year 1753 commenced Walpole's connection with a new periodical which had just been started under the title of "The World." It was similar in character to the "Guardian," "Idler," "Tatler," and other members of that numerous family of journals that a hundred years ago entertained the town every week with light sketches of society, varied by didactic essays and quizzical attacks upon the follies of the times, without aiming to lead public opinion in literature or politics. His first contribution forms No. VI. of this work, and is a playful description of the arts used by managers of theatres to attract audiences by extraordinary exhibitions that cannot be said to have any connection with the legitimate drama. The writer also alludes to some curious expedients had recourse to in those days for producing the necessary illusions, and this leads to his mentioning other "natural improvements," to wit, landscape-gardening and modelling in confectionary, the absurdities of which he hits off with admirable humour.

Indeed, for this style of composition there can be no question that the talents of Walpole were peculiarly fitted, and had he chosen to devote himself to its cultivation there can be but little doubt that he would have succeeded to the post that had been left vacant since the death of Addison.

A fortnight later he contributed another paper, but it was on a very different theme—this being the "Fortunes of Theodore, King of Corsica," then a prisoner for debt in the King's Bench. It is a curious paper—half pathetic, half humorous: for it was scarcely possible to treat the subject in any other way—the sublime and the ridiculous being always in such close approximation in the history of this unfortunate Sovereign.

His name was Theodore Antony Baron Newhoff, and he was born at Metz about 1696; he belonged to a class by no means rare, even at that period, of gentlemen adventurers, who pushed themselves forward whenever they could find an opening, and sometimes attained a very eminent, if not a very enviable, position. Baron Newhoff pushed himself on to various extraordinary elevations, and at last arrived at the distinction of a crown,—becoming Sovereign of the Island of Corsica. King Theodore, however, does not appear to have reigned either very long or very happily, for in a short time afterwards he was a fugitive, and soon reduced to wandering about from kingdom to kingdom, finding his only revenues in his wits

He visited England more than once—the last time in 1748-9, when he shortly fell into such distress that he was forced, for a subsistence, to have recourse to arts which, had he survived to these severe times, would have made him liable to a communication from the Society for the Suppression of Mendicity. Subscriptions were raised for him, but he disgusted his friends by intimating that they fell very short of his expectations. His Majesty became a prisoner for debt, and subsequently took the benefit of the Insolvent Act, surrendering his kingdom for the advantage of his creditors, who, however, it is believed, gained nothing by the transfer. Theodore remained in the Liberties of the Fleet till December, 1756, when, taking a chair, for which he had no money to pay, he went to the Portuguese Minister, in Audley street, but not finding him at home the Baron prevailed on the Chairman to carry him to a tailor's in Chapel Street, Soho, who, having formerly known him, and pitying his distress, harboured him in his house. Theodore fell ill there the next day, and, dying in a few days, was buried in the churchyard of St. Anne, in that parish.*

Walpole has recorded several amusing traits of this personage, who figured very prominently in the gossiping annals of the period. The Countess of Yarmouth appears to have felt some sympathy for an adventurer so much less fortunate than herself. The Earl of Granville, and several merchants in the city,

* "Lord Orford's Works." Vol. i. p. 157.

interested themselves for the insolvent monarch: but he tried to make so good a market of his misfortunes, that the majority withdrew their subscriptions. Dodsley, the publisher of "The World," was among those who endeavoured to set the poor King upon his legs again, but the only return he obtained for his kindness appeared in the shape of a lawyer sent by "his Majesty" to threaten him with a prosecution for publishing Mr. Walpole's paper respecting him in that periodical, on the grounds that it had prevented the King of Corsica receiving contributions from many persons who had previously been disposed to relieve his necessities. Notwithstanding these questionable proceedings, the author, after his Majesty's death, exercised his influence and purse to obtain him Christian burial, and furnish his grave with a monument. In a letter bearing the date September 29th, 1757, he thus alludes to his charitable exertions in favour of the defunct.

"I am putting up a stone in St. Anne's Churchyard for King Theodore. When I sent the inscription to the vestry for the approbation of the minister and churchwardens, they demurred, and took some days to consider whether they would suffer him to be called King of Corsica. Happily they have acknowledged his title. Here is the inscription; over it is a crown exactly copied from his coin:—

'NEAR THIS PLACE IS INTERRED
THEODORE, KING OF CORSICA,
WHO DIED IN THIS PARISH DEC. 11, 1756.
IMMEDIALELY AFTER LEAVING THE KING'S BENCH PRISON,
BY THE BENEFIT OF THE ACT OF INSOLVENCY;
IN CONSEQUENCE OF WHICH HE REGISTERED HIS KINGDOM OF CORSICA
FOR THE USE OF HIS CREDITORS.

The grave, great teacher, to a level brings,
Heroes and beggars, galley-slaves and kings.
But Theodore this lesson learned ere dead;
Fate poured its lessons on his living head,
Bestowed a kingdom and denied him bread.' "*

Walpole's next contribution forms No. X. of "The World," and is an amusing dissertation on the difficulties thrown in the way of the proper observance of Saints' days, by the recent reformation of the calendar; notwithstanding which, however, it is asserted that the Glastonbury Thorn obstinately continued to respect its old anniversary. In the fourteenth number there is from the same pen a pleasing paper on female correspondence, introducing two curious letters—one from the Emperor Maximilian to his daughter Margaret, Duchess Dowager of Saxony, Governess of the Netherlands, the other from Anne, Countess of Dorset and Pembroke, to Sir Joseph Williamson.† He did not contribute again to this publication till the twenty-eighth number; and the paper there published has generally been considered his happiest effort. It is one of those extravagances in which a humourous writer is sure to appear to advantage. He insists that old women are the most proper objects of love, and cleverly brings forward instances in which very venerable Venuses have excited the most ardent passion in individuals of the other sex.

It was nearly a year and a half before "The World" gave its readers another production from the

* "Walpole Letters." Vol. iii. p. 323.

† Secretary of State in the reign of Charles II.

same source. The subject is, "True Politeness;" and it contains an amusing reference to the extreme civility of certain highwaymen, who were famous for plundering their victims with the most perfect good breeding. The next paper from Mr. Walpole followed at a still greater interval; it shows the author's growing taste for antiquarian reading, from which the chief portion of its materials are drawn, and these relate to some curious features in the legacies and penances of our ancestors.

The author wrote a sequel to a paper written by James Tilson, Esq. on suicide, setting the subject in as ludicrous a light as it was possible to place it. This seems to have been his last contribution to "The World," which, about this time, ceased to exist. Nevertheless Mr. Walpole wrote two or three additional papers: one, at least, was political, another contained a clever ridicule of the multiplicity of books—an abuse, by the way, which has of late years increased at least ten-fold. The last of the series was a sort of contribution to the "Curiosities of Literature," relating to the kingdom of China.

Mr. Walpole's contributions to "The World" attracted considerable attention in the higher circles; and the author appears by no means dissatisfied either with them or the popularity they enjoyed. He writes to a friend,—

"I inclose a 'World' to you [No. 28, 'Old women most proper objects for love'], which, by a story I shall tell you, I find is called mine. I met Mrs. Clive two nights ago, and told her I had been in

the meadows, but would walk no more there, for there was all the world. 'Well,' says she, 'and don't you like the "World?" I hear it was very clever last Thursday. All I know is, that you will meet some of your acquaintance there.' "*

This periodical had the good fortune to abtain the approbation of some among its readers, who bore the reputation of being difficult to please.

"Send me no translations," writes Lady Wortley Montagu to her sister, "no periodical papers, though I confess some of the 'World' entertained me very much, particularly Lord Chesterfield and Horry Walpole; but whenever I met Dodsley I wished him out of the world with all my heart. The title was a very lucky one, because as you see productive of puns—world without end, which is all the species of wit some people can either practise or understand." †

There is no doubt the pages of "The World" were made as entertaining as the best writers of the day could render them, and the welcome it received from society may readily be imagined when it is known that its principal contributors were Lord Chesterfield, Lord Bath, Mr. W. Whithed, Sir Charles Hanbury Williams, Horace Walpole, Soame Jennings, Mr. Cambridge, and Mr. Coventry; and the editor was Mr. Edward Moore, the author of several works of considerable repute. If "The World" does not always reach the playful vivacity of "The Spectator," two Addisons were not to be expected in a century; as a collection of light and agreeable essays,

* "Walpole Letters." Vol. iii. p. 9.

† "Lady Wortley Montagu's Letters." Edited by Lord Wharncliffe.

the work deserves to find an honourable position in every collection of elegant literature.*

Early in the month of February of this year, while Mr. Walpole was in town, a fire broke out near St. James's Street. It was a spectacle he could not resist seeing, for he considered it "the only horrid sight that is fine!" On the first alarm he thrust his feet into his slippers, flung on an embroidered suit that hung on the chair, ran to Bury Street, and was soon in the midst of snow, dirt, confusion, and terror.

"It would have made a picture," he adds in mentioning the occurrence—"the horror of the flames, the snow, the day breaking with difficulty through so foul a night, and my figure party per *pale*, mud, and gold. It put me in mind of Lady Margaret Herbert's providenee, who asked somebody for a *pretty* pattern for a night-cap. 'Lord,' said they, 'what signifies the pattern of a nightcap?' 'Oh, child,' said she 'but you know in case of fire.'"†

He was leading a busy life at this time,—politics and the fine arts, literature and bricks and mortar, by turns engrossing his attention. This he mentions in the following letter, written early in March of the same year:—

"You know how late I used to rise: it is worse and worse. I stay late at debates and committees: for with all our tranquillity and my indifference, I think I am never out of the House of Commons; from thence it is the fashion of the writer to go to vast

* "The World" has been reprinted, we believe, more than once. The duodecimo edition, in six volumes, long formed a favourite portion of the "British Essayists."

† "Walpole Letters," Vol. iii. p. 102.

assemblies, which are followed by vast suppers, and those by balls. Last week I was from two at noon till ten at night at the House: I came home, dined, new-dressed myself entirely, went to a ball at Lord Holderness's, and stayed till five in the morning."*

He acknowledges a partiality for dancing and other fashionable amusements; and endeavours to excuse his dissipation by stating that others were equally blameable. No one, however, knew better how to employ his time profitably, and whilst he was representing himself an idler, he was in fact engaged in a variety of occupations that scarcely left him any leisure.

On the 12th of May, 1757, much curiosity was excited in the public mind by the appearance of a *brochure*, entitled "A Letter from Xo Ho, a Chinese Philosopher at London, to his friend Lieu Chi, at Peking." It was a well written quiz upon the political absurdities of the time, assuming to have proceeded from an intelligent Chinese; and it took so well, that though written in an hour and a half,† and sent to the press the next day, it passed through five editions in a fortnight. In the same year was written "An Inquiry into the person and age of the long-lived Countess of Desmond." This paper endeavoured to throw some light upon the history of the female Methuseleh, whose prolonged existence had been a puzzle to more than one historian.

* "Walpole Letters." Vol. iii., p. 104.

† So Walpole declares in a letter to Mann, May 19, 1757. Mrs. Clive told the author he would be sent to the Tower for writing it; to which he replied, "Well, my father was there before me."

Authorities vary as to her age, some allowing one hundred and forty years, others adding to it at least ten years more; but in general they made their account of her sufficiently marvellous. Mr. Walpole will not allow her more than a hundred and forty-five years; he puts together some interesting memoranda respecting her family, and at the end adds a postcript which states that he had examined the portrait of the Countess at Windsor, and discovered an inscription on the back of the picture, which proved beyond question that the venerable lady had never sat for it—the original having been quite a different person.

At this time Prospero Lambertini wore the tiara; and proved himself one of the best and wisest of the Roman Pontiffs. The virtues of the holy father had become known to Mr. Walpole, and meeting with a portrait of him, he wrote under it this inscription:—

PROSPERO LAMBERTINI,
BISHOP OF ROME,
BY THE NAME OF BENEDICT XIV;
WHO, THOUGH AN ABSOLUTE PRINCE,
REIGNED AS HARMLESS
AS A DOGE OF VENICE.
HE RESTORED THE LUSTRE OF THE TIARA
BY THOSE ARTS ALONE
BY WHICH ALONE HE OBTAINED IT,
HIS VIRTUES.
BELOVED BY PAPISTS,
ESTEEMED BY PROTESTANTS,
A PRIEST WITHOUT INSOLENCE OR INTERESTEDNESS,
A PRINCE WITHOUT FAVORITES,
A POPE WITHOUT NEPOTISM,
AN AUTHOR WITHOUT VANITY;

IN SHORT, A MAN
WHOM NEITHER WIT NOR POWER COULD SPOIL.
THE SON OF A FAVORITE MINISTER,
BUT ONE WHO NEVER COURTED A PRINCE NOR WORSHIPPED A CHURCHMAN,
OFFERS, IN A FREE PROTESTANT COUNTRY, THIS DESERVED INCENSE
TO THE BEST OF THE ROMAN PONTIFFS.
MDCCLVII.

This was forwarded by the author to Sir Horace Mann, who among others of his Florentine friends, showed it to the Abbate Nicolini. This gentleman, after translating it, enclosed it to the Cardinal Archiato, by whom it was shown to the Pontiff. Such a testimonial from a stranger, afforded the Pope very great gratification. He caused the inscription to be copied and sent to all his friends, and no less modestly than gratefully expressed his sense of the honour that had been conferred upon him.*

It appears as if Walpole had, at an early period, entertained an idea of illustrating in some way the history of art in this country, for in Vertue's "Diary" there is an entry, in the month of June, 1746, to the following effect:—

"Horace Walpole, Esq., came to me. After I had shewn him many works I was then about, he asked me whether I had not some other work in hand besides these. It surprised me, because I had not mentioned anything about the painters' heads, history, &c."†

* "Lord Orford's Work," Vol. i. p. 218. In writing to a friend at Bologna, the Pope is stated to have said: "Non mandiamo tutto al nostro Canonico Peggi, acciò conosca che siamo come le statue della facciata di San Pietro in Vaticano, che a chi à nella piazza e così lontano, fanno una bella comparsa, ma a chi poi viene vicino, fanno figure di orridi Mascheroni."

† "Vertue's MSS."

Probably he had heard of the researches and inquiries which the engraver had been making in illustration of the progress of Art in England, and wished to ascertain the exact nature and direction of his labours. On being duly informed, he took no further steps to fulfil his own designs, and was shortly afterwards too much engrossed with further transformations of Chop Straw Hill, to devote himself to the task of chronicling the advancement of the Fine Arts; but two events contributed largely to bring back his attention to the subject—one being the death of Vertue, and the transfer to him of all his papers, by purchase, from his widow; and the other, the partial completion of his numerous improvements at his gothic mansion, and the setting up of a private press within its precincts, as a means of affording him constant literary occupation. This plan of turning amateur printer had been adopted on more than one occasion by gentlemen of easy circumstances, either to publish their own productions, or to re-print scarce works for circulation amongst the increasing brotherhood of antiquaries.

Having set up a press, with a due proportion of types, the next thing was to set up a printer. Walpole was not long before he met with the sort of man he wanted. William Robinson, the first person engaged to conduct the Strawberry Hill press, is thus described by his employer in a letter dated August 4, 1757:

"He has the most sensible look in the world; Garrick said he

would give any money for four actors with such eyes—they are more Richard the Third's than Garrick's own; but whatever his eyes are, his head is Irish. Looking for something I wanted in a drawer, I perceived a parcel of strange romantic words in a large hand, beginning a letter; he saw me see it, yet left it, which convinces me that it was left on purpose; it is the grossest flattery to me, couched in most ridiculous scraps of poetry, which he has retained from things he has printed; but it will best describe itself.

'Sir,—I date this from shady bowers, nodding groves, and amaranthine shades—close by Old Father Thames's silver side—fair Twickenham's luxurious shades—Richmond's near neighbour, where great George the King resides. You will wonder at my prolixity—in my last I informed you that I was going into the country to transact business for a private gentleman. The gentleman is the Honourable Horatio Walpole, son to the late great Sir Robert Walpole, who is very studious, and an admirer of all the liberal arts and sciences; amongst the rest he admires printing. He has fitted out a complete printing-house at his country-seat, and has done me the favour to make me sole manager and operator (there being no one but myself.) All men of genius resorts to his house, courts his company, and admires his understanding; what with his own and their writings, I believe I shall be pretty well employed. I have pleased him, and I hope to continue so to do. Nothing can be more warm than the weather has been here this time past; they have in London, by the help of glasses, roasted in the Artillery Ground, fowls and quarters of lamb. The coolest days that I have felt since May last, are equal to, nay far exceed the warmest that I ever felt in Ireland. The place I am in now, is all my comfort from the heat—the situation of it is close to the Thames, and is Richmond Gardens (if you were ever in them) in miniature, surrounded by bowers, groves, cascades, and ponds, and on a rising ground, not very common in this part of the country—the building elegant, the furniture of peculiar taste, magnificent and superb. He is a bachelor, and spends his time in the studious rural taste—not like his father, lost in the weather-beaten vessel of state—many people censured, but his conduct was far better than

our late pilots at the helm, and more to the interest of England—they follow his advice now, instead of provoking a war, for that was ever against England's interest.'

"I laughed," added Horace Walpole "for an hour, at this picture of myself, which is much more to the studious magician in the enchanted opera of Rinaldo: not but Twickenham has a romantic genteelness that would figure in a more luxurious climate."*

Walpole appears to have taken a prejudice against his imaginative Caxton, and the latter found his master not quite so liberal a patron as he had anticipated, for, under the date of March 15, 1759, we find the lord of Strawberry Hill stating:—

"At present, even my press is at a stop; my printer, who was a foolish Irishman, and who took himself for a genius, and who grew angry when I thought him extremely the former, and not the least the latter, has left me, and I have not yet fixed upon another."†

Walpole seems to have been unfortunate in his coadjutors, both artistic and literary. At first they please extremely, but in a short time their faults come out in startling relief. Even had Mr. Robinson been a little enthusiastic, and a trifle too self-conceited, his patron might have humoured both these foibles, and have retained him in his establishment. But we think he exaggerated the poor printer's failings, and too readily fell into the very common error of people of his condition, of determining that those of humbler rank to their own, with whom they come into contact, can have no other objects than to deceive and defraud them.

* "Walpole Letters." Vol. iii., p. 309.

† Ibid. Vol. iii., p. 439.

The maiden production of Walpole's press was his friend Gray's two odes, of which he printed a thousand copies in quarto, in the year 1757; this was followed in the same year by a translation of part of Paul Hentzner's Travels, of which he printed two hundred and twenty copies in small octavo. Writing, in July of this year, he appears impressed with the importance of his new occupation, good-humouredly adding a kind of travestie of Pope—

"Some have for wits, and then for poets pass'd;
Turned *printers* next, and proved plain fools at last."

He sent specimens of his typography to Sir Horace Mann, at Florence, and to most of his friends in England. To the former he says, September 3,—

"I hope soon to add another volume to your packet from my press. I shall now only print for presents; or, to talk in a higher style, I shall only give my Louvre editions to privy councillors and foreign ministers."

The Strawberry Hill press, soon became a hobby, and the owner felt proud of exhibiting it to the wondering inspection of his visitors. In the summer of 1757 he writes—

"T'other day my Lady Rochfort, Lady Townshend, Miss Bland, and the Knight of the Garter dined here, and were carried into the printing office and were to see the man print. There were some lines ready placed, which he took off; I gave them to Lady Townshend; here they are—

'The Press Speaks.

'From me wits and poets their glory obtain;
Without me their wit and their verses were vain.
Stop Townshend, and let me but paint what you say;
You the fame I on others bestow, will repay.'

They then asked, as I foresaw, to see the man compose: I gave him four lines out of the 'Fair Penitent,' which he set; but while he went to place them in the press, I made them look at something else without their observing, and, in an instant, he whipped away what he had just set, and to their great surprise, when they expected to see 'Were ye, ye fair,' he presented to my Lady Rochfort the following lines:—

'THE PRESS SPEAKS.

'In vain from you properest name you have flown,
And exchanged lovely Cupid's for Hymen's dull throne:
By my art shall your beauties be constantly sung,
And, in spite of yourself, you shall ever be *young*.'

You may imagine, whatever the poetry was, that the gallantry of it succeeded."*

This sort of entertainment was repeated more than once, and the Walpole Muse pressed into service with much the same effect; but there was business in view of much more importance, than printing indifferent verses. He had projected a work of some consequence, and having written with no slight labour, he was now intent upon bringing it through the press.

In one of Walpole's essays, he mentions various works that have been attempted in the way of classifying authors—whether he had any intention at the time of adding to the list does not appear. "Naudè," we are told by him "collected a list of authors who had disguised their names; and another of great men who had been accused of magic. Decker composed an account of anonymous writings; Pierius Valerianus, gave one catalogue of unfortunate learned men, and another of physicians who were poets; Kortholl,

* "Walpole Letters." Vol. iii. p. 313.

of Bishops who had been poets; and Menage, of ecclesiastics who had written indecent poems."* This list might be considerably increased, but the only addition we intend introducing here, is the name of the author of the essay, who about this time was engaged in writing a biographical work of a similar nature to those we have just mentioned, which he presented to the public, under the modest title of "A Catalogue of the Royal and Noble Authors of England with lists of their works."†

In this country the honours of literature are the exclusive property of no particular class. The sovereign and his nobles have been equally eager in the race for fame, with the peasant and the mechanic, but up to the time of Horace Walpole, titled authors had been so rare, that their collective biographies could not fail of being as interesting as either of the "Curiosities of Literature" enumerated by the Essayist. About the middle of the last century there appeared to arise a more general intellectual movement among the aristocracy than that influential portion of the community had ever known, which has since increased to such an extent that now the instances of noble authorship are so frequent, a work might be compiled as a sequel to Mr. Walpole's that would exceed it in extent, and might perhaps rival it in interest. It is true, we cannot in our time boast of

* "Lord Orford's Works." Vol. i. p. 197.

† In Walpole's preface to this work he again refers to some of the classifications of men of letters that had already been attempted.

a philosopher so illustrious as St. Albans, but in Byron we had a poet such as no peerage ever before produced, and in almost every department of literature and science, there have appeared contributions from noble writers, of a very high degree of merit. This is a subject of congratulation, inasmuch as we cannot but consider this rivalry of intelligence with the less favoured classes of society, beneficial to the mass; and it is in all respects, a more desirable state of things, than that cultivation of exclusive prejudices, vices, follies, and crimes, which in less enlightened times, unpleasantly distinguished the same class of persons.

The first edition of the "Royal and Noble Authors," consisted of an impression of but two hundred copies in small octavo. Of the former Walpole, could produce but a dozen examples, and of these the claim to literary honours is somewhat apocryphal. He commences with our gallant Troubadour, Richard Cœur de Lion, includes Edward II, and VI, the eighth Henry, Queens Catherine Parr, Mary and Elizabeth, the first and second James, Charles I, Frederick Prince of Wales, and Charles, Duke of Orleans; but the latter, whatever claims he may have had to the honours of literature, could not have had any to be classed among the titled authors of England. To these regal biographies, there was originally added, notices of eighty-eight English Peers, to which the author subsequently made the following important addition—thirty-two English Peers, seventeen Peeresses,

thirty-three Scotch Peers, and twenty-five Irish Peers.

The first particular reference to the work in preparation, is to be found in a letter to Sir Horace Mann, dated November 20th, 1757, in which he writes for certain specimens of the Provençal poetry of Richard the I, said to be preserved in the library of San Lorenzo at Florence.*

Walpole took considerable pains in endeavouring to obtain information, and although his obligations to rare manuscript authorities are not very obvious, he continued to collect a large mass of interesting memoranda respecting the objects of his enquiry, that was likely to afford a good deal of entertainment to the general reader; and it was soon discovered that the work was a most successful experiment on the public taste. Indeed the manner in which it was received, most agreeably surprised the author. His sentiments on this point, are well expressed in the following passage, from one of the numerous letters written by him at the period. It bears the date of May 4th, 1758.

"My book," he says, "is marvellously in fashion, to my great astonishment. I did not expect so much truth and such notions of liberty would have made their fortune in this our day. I am preparing an edition for publication, and then I must expect to be a little less civilly treated. My Lord Chesterfield tells everybody that he subscribes to all my opinions."†

The tide of popularity set in with such rapidity,

* "Walpole Letters." Vol. iii. p. 334.

† Ibid. Vol. iii. p. 352.

that at the beginning of the year 1759, the author thus writes to one of his correspondents respecting the sale of his work.

"Two thousand have been printed, and though nine hundred went off at once, it would be presumptious in me to expect that the rest will be sold in any short time. I only mean to add occasionally to my private copy whatever more I can collect and correct: and shall, perhaps, but leave behind me materials for a future edition, in which should be included what I have hitherto omitted. * * Except in two magazines, not a word of censure has passed on me in print."*

In a subsequent letter, however, he speaks of being

"Much abused in all the magazines lately for my 'Catalogue.' The chief points in dispute lie in a very narrow compass; they think I don't understand English, and I am sure they don't; yet they will not be convinced, for I shall certainly not take the pains to set them right. Who they are I don't know; the highest, I believe, are Dr. Smollett or some chaplain of my uncle."†

The "Catalogue of Royal and Noble Authors" will always be regarded as an authority upon the subject upon which it treats. It is a useful collection of facts for the biographer, but the notices rarely aspire to personal history and often give what may be termed the intellectual history in too meagre a shape—in short, they consist too frequently of a mere catalogue of the writings of the several authors. Sometimes, too, this is given incorrectly, and the error becomes the more inexcusable when relating to points which may almost be said to have come under the cognizance of

* "Walpole Letters." Vol. iii. p. 425.

† Smollet's political principles led him to regard with a prejudiced view anything emanating from the Walpoles.

the writer. In his account of Charles Mordaunt, Earl of Peterborough, for instance, he enumerates a ballad beginning "I said to my heart between sleeping and waking, &c.," and immediately afterwards adds, "He was author of those well known lines which conclude, "Who'd have thought Mrs. Howard ne'er dreamt it was she.' "* In this reference he makes two productions out of one, of which the passages quoted are the commencing and concluding lines; and it ought to have been sufficiently familiar to him for it was much quoted at Court. Respecting his own contemporaries, with whom he must have been well acquainted, he is tantalizingly brief: but his prejudices which were extremely strong against every one in any way compromised in the opposition to Sir Robert Walpole, are here scarcely apparent. He does justice to the graceful verses of Pulteney, and to the comprehensive genius of Chesterfield; he calls Bubb Doddington, a wit, and pronounces Bolingbroke "one of our best writers." Unfortunately, the work has no pretensions to arrangement, and even the additions made in subsequent editions, were tacked to the end one after another, instead of being inserted in their proper sequence in accordance with the order of their dates. Nevertheless, with all its defects, and they were not few, the undertaking prospered.

Mr. Walpole's literary success was not without its drawbacks, for he was obliged to maintain a learned correspondence. This was far from being agreeable,

* "Lord Orford's Works." Vol. i. p. 439.

and he threatens to have nothing more to do with the world, averring that he had tried pleasure, *vertu*, politics, and literature, and had had enough of them all. He forswears politics and sighs for content and tranquillity, with a little of the other pursuits, that he may not grow morose. Nevertheless, though in this unambitious mood at present, he seems by no means sure of its long continuance.

He acknowledges that he is one of the weakest of human creatures, and is so sensible of his fickleness that he is sometimes inclined to keep a diary of his mind, as some people do of the weather. "To-day" he says, "you see it temperate, to-morrow it may again blow politics and be stormy; for while I have so much quicksilver left, I fear my passionometer will be susceptible of sudden changes."*

Walpole then indulges in a train of depreciatory reflections, that may perhaps show his dissatisfaction with himself and everything, but which it is evident expressed but the passing humour of the moment. His "quicksilver" kept rising, and for a time attained a settled position, but he was subsequently subject to periodical variations of his "passionometer," when he would again express the same humiliating feelings and resolves.

We believe that notwithstanding Walpole's extremely humble appreciation of his own talents, he could not endure unfavourable comments on his writings. This is the cause of the impatience and

* "Walpole Letters." Vol. iii. p. 411.

querulousness that appear so prominently in the following passages from one of his letters to the Rev. H. Zouch :—

"I am sick of the character of author; I am sick of the consequences of it; I am weary of seeing my name in the newspapers; I am tired with reading foolish criticisms on me, and as foolish defences of me; and I trust my friends will be so good as to let the last abuse of me pass unanswered. It is called 'Remarks' on my Catalogue, asperses the revolution more than it does my book, and, in a word, is written by a nonjuring preacher, who was a dog-doctor."*

This severe attack of sickness, can be considered only as a realization of a popular rhyme respecting the abandonment of his habits, under the influence of severe indisposition, by a personage whose name and profession it is not good manners to intimate more clearly. Walpole, criticised too freely, foreswore authorship, but when he recovered of the attack, recommenced his literary labours with tenfold energy.

The "Catalogue of Royal and Noble Authors," went through several editions—to which some additions were generally made by the editor; the last edition revised by himself but not published till after his death, in the quarto collective edition of his works, comprises all these appendices, additions, supplements, and omissions.

The following passage is a happy example of the author's style of speaking of himself and his labours :—

"Pray don't compliment me any more upon my learning; there

* "Walpole Letters." Vol. iii. p. 448.

is nobody so superficial. Except a little history, a little poetry, a little painting, and some divinity, I know nothing. How should I? I who have always lived in the big busy world; who lie abed all the morning, calling it morning as long as you please; who sup in company; who have played at pharaoh half my life, and now at loo till two and three in the morning; who have always loved pleasure; haunted auctions—in short, who don't know so much astronomy as would carry me to Knightsbridge, nor more physic than a physician, nor, in short, anything that is called science. If it were not that I lay up a little provision in summer, like the ant, I should be as ignorant as all the people I live with. How I have laughed when some of the magazines have called me *the learned gentleman.**"

This humility we can now estimate at its full value. It became a habit with him to consider his works as of little interest and of less value—he always depreciates himself and insists upon it that his productions are of no merit whatever: he sometimes gets extremely positive on this point, from which he is only to be driven by some critic who partially agrees with him in opinion; and then the offended author embraces the opposite side of the question, with far more zeal than ever he had exhibited whilst its assailant.

In the same year in which Walpole gave to the world his first edition of "Royal and Noble Authors," there issued from his press a volume of his "Fugitive Pieces," a small octavo, of which he printed two hundred copies, and dedicated them to his cousin Conway. They comprised his papers in "The World," and his subsequent minor productions. This work was followed by another small octavo, of which he printed seven

* "Walpole Letters." Vol. iv. p. 27.

hundred copies. It was an account of Russia, written by Mr. Charles Whitworth, a distinguished diplomatist, who in 1720, had been created in the Irish peerage, Baron Whitworth of Galway; and was the result of his observations in that empire, during the period in which he acted as Ambassador from England to the Court of St. Petersburg.* He died in 1725. Walpole prefaced his Lordship's work with a biographical sketch of the author, in which he states that he received the MS. from Richard Owen Cambridge, Esq., who had bought it with a curious set of books, collected by Zolman, who had been Secretary to Stephen Poyntz. According to the list given in the quarto edition of Lord Orford's works, a third small octavo, of which he struck off the same number of copies, was printed the same year. It was a "Parallel of Magliabechi and Hill," written by Mr. Spence. But in a letter to Mr. Chute, dated February the 2nd, of the following year, Walpole states that it is published "this day." Judging from what escapes him in this letter, he did not entertain a very high opinion of this work.

In the year 1759, there issued from the Strawberry Hill Press, an impression of five hundred

* In 1714 Mr. Whitworth received the appointment of Plenipotentiary to the Diet of Augsbourg and Ratisbon; which two years later was followed by that of Envoy Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary to the King of Prussia; in 1717 he was accredited Envoy Extraordinary to the Hague, and in 1722 was appointed to the Congress of Cambray.

copies in quarto of Mr. Bentley's "Lucan." It does not appear to have attracted a great deal of attention; nor does the printer seem to have cared much about the result. From some depreciatory notices of him by the critics, he had contracted a distaste for authorship, and was not eager to make another experiment. Writing to his friend, Sir David Dalrymple, July 11, 1759, Walpole assures him :—

"I have no intention of continuing to write. I could not expect to succeed again with so much luck—indeed I think it so—as I have done. It would mortify me more now, after a little success, to be despised than it would have done before; and if I could please as much as I should wish to do, I think one should dread being a voluminous author. My own idleness, too, bids me desist. If I continued, I should certainly take more pains than I did in my 'Catalogue'; the trouble would not only be more than I care to encounter, but would probably destroy what I believe the only merit of my last work, the ease."*

At this period, the only works from his own pen he had given to the world, were "The Royal and Noble Authors," and the "Fugitive Pieces." Indeed he had only made his first steps as an author; and it is somewhat amusing to find him hinting his dread of becoming a voluminous writer—which he subsequently laboured most effectually to be. But Horace was always denying himself. When most earnest in his assertions, his natural inclinations were usually in direct opposition to them.

Walpole found the troubles of typography more

* "Walpole Letters." Vol. iii. p. 462.

than he could endure with patience. In a letter to Sir David Dalrymple, dated December 21, 1761, he says,—

"You will I hope find less trouble with printers than I have done. Just when my book was, I thought, ready to appear, my printer ran away, and has left it very imperfect. This is the fourth I have tried, and I own it discourages me. Our low people are so corrupt and such knaves, that being cheated and disappointed, are all the fruits of attempting to amuse oneself or others. Literature must struggle with many difficulties. They who print for profit, print only for profit: we who print to entertain or instruct others, are the bubbles of our designs. Defrauded, abused, pirated—don't you think, Sir, one need have resolution—mine is very nearly exhausted."*

But the printers were not solely to blame. It seems that all those who had anything to do with books were in league against the amateur author.

Feb. 23rd, 1764. "My press from the narrowness of its extent, and having but one man and a boy, goes very slow; nor have I room or fortune to carry it farther. What I have already in hand or promised, will take up a long time. The London booksellers play me all manner of tricks; if I do not allow them ridiculous profit, they will do nothing to promote the sale, and when I do, they buy up the impression, and sell it at an advanced price before my face. This is the case of my two first volumes of anecdotes, for which people have been made to pay half a guinea and a guinea more than the advertised price. In truth, the plague I have had in every shape with my own printers, engravers, the booksellers, and besides my own trouble, have almost discouraged me from what I took up at first as an amusement, but which has produced very little of it.

"I am sorry, upon the whole, Sir, to be forced to confess to you, that I have met with so many discouragements in virtu and literature. If an independent gentleman, though a private one, finds

* "Walpole Letters." Vol. iv. p. 197.

such obstacles, what must an ingenious man do, who is obliged to couple views of profit with zeal for the public. Or do our artists and booksellers cheat me the more because I am a gentleman? Whatever is the cause, I am almost as sick of the profession of editor, as of author. If I touch upon either more, it will be more idly, though chiefly because I never can be idle."*

Walpole's taste for Art had developed itself in various ways since he had returned from his first foreign tour. He was fond of enquiring about pictures and engravings, objects of *vertu*, and sculptural antiquities. George Vertue, an engraver of considerable merit, who was much appealed to by his contemporaries on artistical subjects, and was frequently employed by the nobility in arranging their collections of pictures, had attracted his attention, and Walpole had paid him more than one visit, in which he had become strongly impressed with the extent of his information on the progress of the Fine Arts in England. He died July 24th, 1756, and his widow, some time afterwards, applied to Walpole, as a gentleman of acknowledged taste for Art, to purchase a collection of notes and memoranda respecting painting and engraving, which Vertue had continued for a long series of years, forming a mass of intelligence illustrating the progress of these arts in this country not to be found in any printed work. Walpole purchased the entire collection. Vertue's prints, miniatures, drawings, and books were sold by auction on the 7th of May, 1757, when Walpole also secured his copies from Holbein, his Philip and Mary, from

* "Walpole Letters." Vol. iv. p. 380.

the original at Woburn, and his small whole length of Mary, Queen of Scots.

Whilst engaged upon arranging the materials he had purchased from Vertue's widow, Walpole seems at first to have been undecided as to what ought to be the extent of his labours and of his authorship, for in a letter to the Rev. H. Zouch, dated May 14, 1759, he says:—

"I certainly do propose to digest the materials that Vertue has collected, relating to English artists, but doubting of the merit of the subject as you do Sir, and not proposing to give myself much trouble about it, I think at present, that I shall still call the work his."*

Even after the lapse of a year he seems to entertain the same opinion of the subject, calling it "dry and uninteresting, and the materials scarce worth arranging."† He states his intention to bestow but little pains upon it.

We attribute these depreciating notices to the trouble the author had in going over the numerous volumes of notes which the indefatigable engraver had accumulated. In the collection of Vertue's papers, formerly at Strawberry Hill, there were about forty volumes, some of them not very legible, and, in general, very closely written, in a small hand. To extract, digest, arrange, and connect these memoranda, was certainly a tedious occupation—and may excuse the doubts and misgivings which Walpole could scarcely avoid expressing. Perhaps the pur-

* "Walpole Letters." Vol. iii. p. 448.

† Ibid. Vol. iv, p. 45.

chaser may have been as much dissatisfied with his bargain as the editor was with his labour. He persevered in his task, however, and as he put the chaotic fragments into shape he became as sensible of their value as of their interest, and shrunk from the idea of diminishing the merit of their author. He deems it surprising that the industry of one man could at this late period have amassed so near a complete history of our artists, and disclaims having any share in the work beyond arranging the materials.* He now showed portions of his work to such of his literary friends whose opinion had most weight with him, and their praises further stimulated his own admiration. Towards the end of November, 1760, we find him writing to a friend :—

"I am come to put my anecdotes of painting into the press, you are one of the few that I expect will be entertained with it. It has warmed Gray's coldness so much, that he is violent about it; indeed there is an infinite quantity of new and curious things about it; but as it is quite foreign from all popular topics, I don't suppose it will be much attended to."†

In this, however, he was mistaken; the work, when published, was much read and more talked of. Gray was very far from being the only person who became enthusiastic in its favour. When the book was completely established, Walpole does full justice to his pioneer. In March 20, 1762, he writes to the Rev. Henry Zouch :—

"I am glad you are pleased with my 'Anecdotes of Painting,'

* "Walpole Letters," Vol. iv. p. 135.

† Ibid. Page 113.

but I doubt you praise me too much: it was an easy task when I had the materials collected, and I would not have the materials of forty years, which was Vertue's case, depreciated in compliment to the work of four months, which is almost my whole merit."*

The first edition of the "Anecdotes of Painting" was in three volumes, small quarto, with one of engravings. It was published in 1761, in an impression of six hundred copies.

Walpole had the reputation of composing other works—several of the party pamphlets of the period being attributed to him. On this subject he writes:

Dec. 30th, 1761. "Time does not sharpen my passions or pursuits, and the experience I have had by no means prompts me to make new connections. 'Tis a busy world, and well adapted to those who love to bustle in it; I loved it once, loved its very tempests—now I barely open my window, to view what course the storm takes. The town, who like the devil, when one has sold oneself to him, never permits one to have done playing the fool, believe I have a great hand in their amusements; but to write pamphlets, I mean as a volunteer, one must love or hate, and I have the satisfaction of doing neither. I would not be at the trouble of composing a distich to achieve a revolution."†

Walpole's press remained inactive for two or three years, and it was nearly eight years before he ventured upon printing a production of his own. He was now secretly employed in composing a work very different from anything he had hitherto attempted. The great reputation which had been acquired by works of imagination induced him to make an effort in that direction: but he proceeded with so much

* "Walpole Letters." Vol. iv. p. 217.

† Ibid. Vol. iv. p. 200.

secresy, that even his best friends were not allowed to anticipate what was in store for them. In 1764 he printed, in small quarto, two hundred copies of the curious autobiography of Lord Herbert, of Cherbury, for which he wrote what he elsewhere styles "an equivocal Preface," explaining the circumstances under which the family had suffered the original manuscript to be made public.

Respecting the Life of Lord Herbert, he says:—

"I found it a year ago at Lord Hertford's, to whom Lady Powis had lent it. I took it up and soon threw it down again as the dullest thing I ever saw. She persuaded me to take it home. My Lady Waldegrave* was here in all her grief; Gray and I read it to amuse her. We could not get on for laughing and screaming. I begged to have it in print: Lord Powis, sensible of the extravagance, refused; I insisted, he persisted. I told my Lady Hertford it was no matter, I would print it, I was determined. I sat down and wrote a flattering dedication to Lord Powis, which I knew he would swallow; he did, and gave up his ancestor. But this was not enough; I was resolved the world should not think I admired it seriously, though there are really fine passages in it, and good sense too; I drew up an equivocal preface, in which you will discover my opinion, and sent it with the dedication. The Earl gulped down the one under the palliation of the other, and here you will have all."†

Two hundred copies were printed of this work in quarto. Sir Walter Scott brought out another edition, or, at least, wrote a prefatory notice for one in 1807; a third, with the addition of letters written by Lord Herbert while at the Court of France, appeared in

* Daughter of Sir Edward Walpole.

† "Walpole Letters." Vol. iv p. 430.

1826, and it has been subsequently reprinted more than once.

The same year, 1764, Walpole printed a hundred copies of a quarto edition of "Lady Temple's Poems," and the following year a second edition of the "Anecdotes of Painting."

Walpole was now employed in fashioning a Gothic story of a romantic character: which, from entertaining some doubt of its reception, he preferred should not be printed at his own press. The first edition of this romance possessed the following title, "The Castle of Otranto, a Story translated by William Marshal, Gent., from the original Italian of Onuphrio Muralto*, Canon of the Church of St. Nicholas at Otranto. London, printed for Thomas Lownds, in Fleet-street, 1765." But it was originally published on the day before Christmas Day, 1764, and announced by Walpole as published in a letter of that date to his friend Montagu. It appears very soon to have got into favour, for the 27th of the following January he writes to Lord Hertford, when forwarding a copy, "The enclosed novel is much in vogue; the author is not known, but if you should not happen to like it, I would give you a reason why you need not say so."† At first there was much secresy affected; but when its success was completely established, the author took care to come forward and

* This is said to be an anagram of Horatio Walpole, but it is short of two letters that are in this name, and possesses two others it does not require.

† "Walpole Letters." Vol. iv. p. 491.

claim his laurels. The best account of the history of this remarkable work is to be found in a letter dated March 9, 1765, from the author to his antiquarian friend, Cole. He says :—

"I waked one morning in the beginning of last June from a dream, of which all I could recover was that I thought myself in an ancient castle (a very natural dream for a head filled like mine with Gothic story) and that on the uppermost bannister of a great staircase I saw a gigantic head in armour. In the evening I sat down and began to write, without knowing in the least what I intended to say or relate. The work grew on my hands and I grew fond of it; add that I was very glad to think of anything rather than politics. In short I was so engrossed with my tale, which I completed in less than two months, that one evening I wrote from the time I had drunk my tea, about six o'clock, till half an hour after one in the morning, when my hand and fingers were so weary that I could not hold the pen to finish the sentence, but left Matilda and Isabella talking in the middle of a paragragh."*

But in another place he confesses that he had no plan when he first commenced writing the work, and possessed no definite object beyond the desire to amuse himself.†

Subsequently he said, in writing the "Castle of Otranto," it was not so much his intention to recal the exploded marvels of old romance, as to blend the wonderful of old stories with the natural of modern novels.‡

* "Walpole Letters." Vol. v. p. 4.

† "Walpole Letters." Vol. vi. p. 73.

‡ Among the most influential of the critics who lauded this work was Dr. Warburton, who was very far from being a panegyrist of Walpole. He expresses his opinion in a note on the following lines from Pope's imitation of one of the epistles of Horace :—

The brilliant success of the new romance, as we have already intimated, soon made the author declare himself—for others were likely to gain the credit of it; and of these pretenders the poet Gray appears to have been the favourite. The first impression was quickly disposed of, and a new edition was equally well patronized. Nevertheless there were some, and these among the author's most particular friends, whose opinion of its merit was far from being satisfactory to him.

Following the example of the "Castle of Otranto" the more important work Walpole published the following year, so well known by the title of "Historic Doubts on the Life and Reign of King Richard the Third" did not issue from the Strawberry Hill Press. In the Preface to this production, the author declares that the character of Richard, as drawn by historians, appeared to him to be made up of prejudice and invention: apparently with the object of making that of his successful

> "The peers grew proud in horsemanship t'excel
> Newmarket's glory rose as Britain's fell;
> The soldier breathed the gallantries of France,
> And every flowery courtier writ romance."

"Amidst all this nonsense," says Warburton, "when things were at the worst, we had been entertained with what I will venture to call a masterpiece in the Fable; and of a new species likewise. The piece I mean is the 'Castle of Otranto.' The scene is laid in Gothic chivalry; where a beautiful imagination, supported by strength of judgment, has enabled the author to go beyond his subject, and effect the full purpose of the ancient tragedy; that is, to purge the passions by pity and terror, in colouring as great and harmonious as in any of the best dramatic writers."

rival, Henry VII, more bright by comparison. Upon this hint he wrote. He brought forward whatever documents were accessible, as well as the statements of contemporary writers, in favour of this much-abused Sovereign : and endeavoured to advocate the cause of Richard by collecting evidence against his successor. As the advocate sought to clear his client from the suspicion of six murders, and four executions, which deserved to come under the same title—it may be imagined that he had no light task before him. Unfortunately for the cause he had undertaken, he was too often satisfied with inferences instead of proofs. He declared that such and such murders were unnecessary, and therefore could not have been committed; and ventured to acknowledge that "What did really happen in so dark a period it would be rash to affirm." The book was a specimen of special pleading, with all the labour we sometimes see brought forward in criminal cases with the object of saving some great criminal already condemned in public opinion.

Gray, when writing to the author, just after its publication, says,—

"I have heard it objected, that you raise doubts and difficulties, and do not satisfy them by telling us what is really the case. I have heard you charged with disrespect to the King of Prussia; and above all to King William and the revolution. My own objections are little more essential; they relate chiefly to inaccuracies of style, which either debase the expression or obscure the meaning. As to your arguments, most of the principal parts are made out with a clearness and evidence that no one would expect, where

materials are so scarce. Yet I still suspect Richard of the murder of Henry VI."*

To this his friend replies :—

"The Duke of Richmond and Lord Lyttelton agree with you, that I have not disculpated Richard of the murder of Henry VI. I own to you, it is the crime of which, in my own mind, I believe him most guiltless. Had I thought he committed it, I should never have taken the trouble to apologize for the rest. I am not at all positive or obstinate on your other objection, nor know exactly what I believe on many points of this story. And I am so sincere that, except a few notes hereafter, I shall leave the matter to be settled or discussed by others."†

The "others" soon made their appearance. The "Critical Review" attacked the apologist of Richard for not having referred to Guthrie; to which he replied by affirming that he quoted the living works of dead authors, not the dead works of living ones. A critic in the "London Chronicle" was treated with still less respect. M. Diverdun, a French historian, who had illustrated English history, and David Hume, whose reputation as an historian was European, were as cheaply disposed of. The subject excited a good deal of controversy, and among others who entered into it was the Rev. Dr. Milles, Dean of Exeter, then President of the Society of Antiquaries, who read, at a meeting of that society, an answer to the "Historic Doubts," which elicited from the author a smart rejoinder. The Rev. Mr. Masters, another antiquary of reputation, took the field in 1773, in the second volume of the "Archæologia," on the same side as his

* "Gray's Life and Works." Vol. iv. p. 105.

† "Walpole Letters." Vol. v. p. 190.

President; and finding that the sense of the Antiquaries was against him, Walpole published a flippant and sarcastic reply to Mr. Masters, at the end of which he announced his determination to withdraw from the Antiquarian Society, in terms anything but respectful to that learned body. From that time he became extremely severe upon Antiquaries, and was never tired of ridiculing their pretensions. We must here go a little in advance, to state that in February, 1793, Walpole published a Postcript to his "Historic Doubts," where apparently he gives up his client, because the crimes, the existence of which he had doubted, as not likely to have been committed by any human being, had recently been perpetrated in the French capital by the infamous Philippe, Duc D'Orleans, father of the late ex-King of the French.

In Walpole's letters to his friend, the Rev. W. Cole, he is very caustic upon Masters and his abettors. He assumes to be only amused at such opposition; but it is exceedingly clear that he was in no slight degree annoyed by it. His reverend friend was apparently quite as indignant as himself, and allows no opportunity to escape him of ministering to the offended author's vanity and prejudices.

The question we believe has been determined against Walpole; and the "Historic Doubts" have not much altered the opinion of Richard III, which had previously been entertained by historical readers. Nevertheless the publication indicates considerable research and a good deal of

skill. A similar degree of talent expended on a more popular subject, would have produced a work that could not have failed in obtaining extensive popularity.

Richard has had several advocates between the commencement of the seventeenth century and the middle of the nineteenth, but has benefitted little by their exertions. Guthrie in his "History of England" had rejected a considerable portion of the traditional history of Richard as fabulous, and stated his belief that the Duke of Clarence was not drowned in a butt of Malmsey, according to the received story, but drank of that wine to such excess as to have shortened his existence. A few other writers of less note have attempted to make the crooked-backed tyrant appear a little more amiable than that best of chroniclers, Shakspere, has handed him down to us; and recently Miss Halsted has put forth a most elaborate defence of him, taking up the arguments of Walpole, and adding to his authorities: but we are satisfied that all such labour is completely thrown away. It is but attempting to wash the black-a-moor white. Richard III will still continue to figure in our royal gallery, with all his bad attributes. His crimes have been made a portion of the national faith; his hump has become historical.

The "Castle of Otranto" was translated into the French language in the year 1767, and appears to have excited in France as much admiration as attention. The Baron de Grimm could not fail of noticing such a publication; his ready pen was in instant

requisition to mark its advent into the gay world to which he belonged, and he describes it as

"A series of supernatural appearances, put together under the most interesting form imaginable. Let one be ever so much of a philosopher," he adds, "that enormous helmet, that monstrous sword, the portrait which starts from its frame and walks away, the skeleton of the hermit praying in the oratory, the vaults, the subterranean passages, the moonshine—all these things make the hair of the sage stand on end, as much as that of the child and his nurse: so much are the sources of the marvellous the same to all men. It is true that nothing very important results at last from all these wonders; but the aim of the author was to amuse, and he certainly cannot be reproached with having missed his aim."*

The public taste has very much improved since 1765, and Walpole's "Gothic Story" has fallen into neglect. In the composition of the narrative, the author had not studied the characteristics of time and place. The characters are not Italian, and a striking deficiency in natural interest pervades the entire work.

In the summer of 1766, Walpole printed his "Account of the Giants lately discovered; in a letter to a Friend in the country." It was intended as a quiz upon a statement made by Captain Byron, that he had beheld Patagonians of enormous stature. It was pleasant and lively.

That Walpole had a decided intention of illustrating the history of the streets of London with antiquarian anecdote, is stated in more than one place.

"I have long," he writes, to his friend Cole, on April 16, 1768, "had thoughts of drawing up something for London like St. Foix's,

* "Historical and Literary Memoirs and Anecdotes." Vol. iii. p. 292.

Rues de Paris, and have made some collections. I wish you would be so good, in the course of your reading, to mark down any passage to that end: as where any great houses of the nobility were situated; or in what street any memorable event happened. I fear the subject will not furnish much till later times, as our princes kept their courts up and down the country in such a vagrant manner."

The work to which he refers as the model for this undertaking, bears the title "Essais Historiques sur Paris, par Germain-François Paulain de Saint Foix," but Walpole here does not acknowledge that he found the idea in the manuscript collections he had purchased of the widow of Vertue, the engraver.

It is much to be regretted that Walpole did not proceed with this idea: if he could have given to the subject a sufficient degree of industry, there is no doubt he could have produced a very lively and interesting work. More than one attempt has since been made to fulfil the intentions of the Lord of Strawberry, in favour of the streets of our great metropolis; but though much talent has been displayed in illustrating the subject, we yet wait to see a work devoted to it, worthy of the facilities for obtaining intelligence which the great advancement made in antiquarian knowledge of late years has thrown open to the student.*

Walpole's tragedy of "The Mysterious Mother," was finished in the spring of 1768. Writing to his friend, George Montagu, at this time, he says:—

"I have finished my tragedy, but as you would not bear the subject, I will say no more of it, but that Mr. Chute, who is not

* Since this was written, Mr. Murray has published the excellent "Hand-Book of London," by Mr. Peter Cunningham, F.S.A.

easily pleased, likes it; and Gray, who is still more difficult, approves it. I am not yet intoxicated enough with it to think it would do for the stage, though I wish to see it acted; but as Mrs. Pritchard leaves the stage next month, I know nobody could play the Countess; nor am I disposed to expose myself to the impertinences of that jackanapes, Garrick, who lets nothing appear but his own wretched stuff, or that of creatures still duller, who suffer him to alter their pieces as he pleases. I have written an epilogue in character for the Clive, which she would speak admirably; but I am not so sure that she would like to speak it. Mr. Conway, Lady Aylesbury, Lady Lyttelton, and Miss Rich, are to come hither the day after to-morrow, and Mr. Conway and I are to read my play to them: for I have not strength enough to go through the whole alone!"*

The production which Lord Byron has pronounced to be "a tragedy of the highest order," owed its origin to one of the Queen of Navarre's tales. As an imaginative work "The Mysterious Mother," may be regarded as the greatest of Walpole's productions. It indicates the possession of higher powers than were required for the composition of "The Castle of Otranto," and though neither sufficiently dramatic nor characteristic for the theatre, reads better than many plays that have kept possession of the stage.

The Strawberry Hill Press resumed its functions in the spring of 1768, in behalf of Walpole's old friend the President Hénault, who among his manifold sins had written a tragedy in his youth which a Parisian audience had thought proper to damn most unequivocally. Walpole thought "Cornélie" not only "better than some that have succeeded," but "much better than any of our modern tragedies"—certainly an

* "Walpole Letters." Vol. v. p. 199.

opinion anything but flattering to the modern drama. Nevertheless, we feel assured that he printed it more as a compliment towards one to whom he felt obliged for the attentions he had received at his hands at Paris, than from any sincere admiration of the work: he doubted his friend would survive till it was completed at press: the President, however, lived till 1770, when he closed his literary career at the age of eighty-six. It is very probable that he was little missed—not even at the supper table he had left vacant, and all his literary performances soon followed him to the grave. We know nothing that should preserve "Cornélie" from this entombment. The Strawberry Hill Press did but unsepulchre a corpse. There was no revivifying it. If a French play could not live an ordinary term in France, in England it was sure scarcely to survive its birth—and so it proved. Each of Walpole's small impressions of two hundred copies, of which one hundred and fifty were sent to Paris, was at first looked upon as a curiosity: it was looked upon rather than looked into; for its valueless character was speedily discovered, and then no one cared to possess it even as a gift.

The publication of the President's tragedy was amply commented on by his old acquaintance the Baron de Grimm, who like ourselves does not see any merit in the work, or any utility in reprinting it. "It is well known," he says, "that the President was in his day a man whose society was much prized, though he was somewhat frivolous: he was more particularly

caressed by the fair sex. He was very capable of writing a pretty madrigal or love-song, but for a tragedy—that is quite another thing."* This play appears to have been written by the author when he was very young and very deeply in love. When first produced it is said to have met with fair success; this, however, the Baron doubts, as much as he does the ardour said to have existed in the author's breast at the period of its composition.

A pirated edition of his "Mysterious Mother" having been announced, Walpole, though averse to its publication, determined on producing it, and he had fifty copies printed at Strawberry Hill in 1768 in a small octavo. Another small octavo issued from the Strawberry Hill Press the following year. It was "Hoyland's Poems," of which though but a few pages, he printed three hundred copies. During the year 1770, his press was only employed upon a fourth volume of the "Anecdotes of Painting." Six hundred copies of this were printed, but not published till 1780. He produced two small quartos: Anthony Hamilton's "Mémoires de Grammont," of which one hundred were struck off, and thirty of them sent to Paris; and a series of letters written by Edward VI, of which two hundred copies were printed. Five hundred of two numbers of "Miscellaneous Antiquities," were printed in small quarto in 1772.

The descriptive Catalogue of the collections at

* "Historical and Literary Memoirs and Anecdotes." Vol. iii. p. 360.

Strawberry Hill was printed in small quarto in 1774; an impression of a hundred copies—six being on large paper. Ten years later there issued from the same press, an edition in royal quarto; of this double the number of copies were struck off. It was illustrated with numerous engravings of Strawberry Hill, both of the principal apartments, and of several exterior views.

In the year 1775 nothing issued from the Strawberry Hill Press but some complimentary verses—Mr. Fitzpatrick's "Dorinda," and a poem by Mr. Charles Fox addressed to Mrs. Crewe. They were very small productions. Nevertheless three hundred copies were required. The press appears to have been idle till 1778, when it produced "The Sleep Walker," a Comedy, by Lady Craven, in small octavo; only seventy-five copies were printed. The following year came out an impression of two hundred of Walpole's Letter to the Editor of Chatterton's Miscellanies. In 1780 he only printed a hundred and fifty copies of Mr. Charles Miller's verses to Lady Horatio Waldegrave, in small quarto. The following year produced two hundred and fifty of Mr. Jones's "Ode on Lord Althorpe's Marriage," and one hundred and twenty of a "Letter from the Honourable Thomas Walpole." The last work being the large edition of the "Catalogue of Strawberry Hill" already named.

Early in the month of February, 1781, the Royal Society of Antiquaries of Scotland, which had been formed only in the previous December, elected Horace Walpole an honorary member. The Earl of Buchan,

their President, notified to Walpole the honour that had been conferred upon him, and in letters to the Earl, of February 10th, and to Sir David Dalrymple, he appears to have regarded it with no slight satisfaction. The real cause of his gratification no doubt lay in the ill feeling with which he had for some time looked upon the London Society of Antiquaries, in consequence of the papers which had emanated from some of the members hostile to his "Historic Doubts." Something to this purpose is admitted in his announcement of the fact to the Rev. Mr. Cole, where he says he allowed himself to be elected to the Edinburgh Society to "show contempt for our own old fools." This he had already shown by withdrawing his name from their books. The little respect with which his works had been treated by some of the antiquaries, excited the ridicule for the whole body which he took no pains to conceal.

Many of these worthies, however, it must be admitted, well deserved all that Walpole said of them; their credulity being only equalled by their ignorance. The forgeries of Ireland, Macpherson, and Chatterton would not have survived a day, had they not found believers and supporters in men reputed to be well versed in our literary antiquities. Their incompetency was often relied upon by the less learned or the more indifferent, and generally very easy dupes they proved themselves. Steevens, who was fond of playing tricks upon his antiquarian friends, laid a trap for them by fabricating a monumental memorial of Hardykanute,

which he purposely placed so as to fall under their observation. It was hoped that the Director of the Society of Antiquaries would be caught by so tempting a bait, but the true character of the "great curiosity," was discovered in time to prevent his committing himself.

Notwithstanding Walpole's animadversions upon people of this class, he was always ready to do justice to their industry.

"You know I am neither formal nor austere," he writes to his friend Cole, "nor have any grave aversions to our antiquaries, though I do now and then divert myself with their solemnity about errant trifles; yet, perhaps, we owe much to their thinking those trifles of importance, or the Lord knows how they would have patience to investigate them so indefatigably."*

In the year 1782, Walpole suffered much from gout; he put himself upon a regimen, but in other matters he was as independent as possible of medical aid:—

"My great nostrum," he says, "is the use of cold water inwardly and outwardly, on all occasions, and total disregard of precaution against catching cold. A hat you know I never wear, my breast I never button, nor wear great coats, &c. I have often had the gout in my face (as last week) and eyes; and instantly dip my head in a pail of cold water, which always cures it, and does not send it anywhere else. All this I dare do, because I have so for these forty years."†

He frequently complains of the indolence of his existence: nevertheless, he was rarely without occupation of some kind, and not unfrequently of many

* "Walpole Letters." Vol. vi. p. 160.
† Ibid. Ibid.

kinds. Something very nearly resembling the shock of an earthquake which occurred at Strawberry Hill in the summer of 1783, appears to have roused him into a greater degree of activity, and he entertained more than one party of distinguished visitors with his usual urbanity. He was often solicited to lend his press to bring out the works of amateur authors, but invariably declined.* In September, 1785, he brought out a French translation by his friend, the Duc de Nivernois, of his (Walpole's) "Essay on Gardening,"† printing an edition of four hundred copies, half of which he sent to France. If the essay was much admired in the original language, and it did receive and deserved the commendation of such a critic as Mathias, the French version met with admirers scarcely less numerous. In the following year his press produced "Christine de Pise."

* He tells Pinkerton, who had solicited this favour, that he had denied it to Lord Harwicke, Lady Mary Forbes, and the Countess of Aldborough. "Walpole Letters." Vol. vi. p. 254.

† Thomas Pitt, first Lord Camelford, writing on November 17, 1789, to his friend Judge Hardinge, on the Duke de Nivernois' translation, says, "I shall be glad to see the work of M. de Nivernois, if it answers at all to the specimen you have sent me. The truth is, that as Mr. Horace Walpole always thinks in French, he ought never to write in English; and I dare be sworn Nivernois' translation will appear much the more original work of the two." "Nichols' Illustrations of Literature in the 18th Century." Vol. vi. p. 118. Walpole's *brochure* first appeared in the quarto volume of the "Anecdotes of Painting," printed at Strawberry Hill, in 1771, and was reprinted at the same press, in quarto, with the Duke's translation in 1785.

CHAPTER VI.

WALPOLE IN PARIS.

BETWEEN the years 1765 and 1775 Horace Walpole paid several visits to France—some of long duration. In the French capital he made acquaintances which led to more than one correspondence. He entered into French society, he acquired French manners, he studied the literature, the institutions, and the character of the French people, and became so mixed up with the history of more than one of the existing celebrities of France, that the introduction into this work of the more remarkable features in the social aspect that country presented to him, is essential to a perfect knowledge both of his character and career; for the effects of these visits to France may be traced through the whole of his subsequent life. Moreover, we shall have occasion to notice instances of the attention with which he regarded the vast changes that were almost secretly proceeding in that country, and the sagacity of the conclusions he drew from his observations.

The higher classes in the capital at this period indulged in a perpetual Belshazzar's feast, and would not have attended to the warning had he ventured to point out the handwriting on the wall which, to his view, so clearly doomed them to destruction.

The rule of the Regent, Duc d'Orleans, accorded that supremacy to profligacy for which it had been striving throughout the reign of Louis XIV.* In literature, in art, and in science there was the same character of voluptuous folly which had hitherto been kept in restraint by what remained of the public sense of decency which the vices of the higher orders could not entirely eradicate from the community. The government of society appeared to be entrusted to an oligarchy of Aspasias, and the whole intelligence of a great nation lay prostrate at the feet of its courtezans.

No feature is more remarkable in the organization of French society at this period, and during the reign of Louis XV, than the degree of artificial respect accorded to those who had become eminent in vice. We shall have occasion to refer to more

* Miss Berry says, "The Regent's government had hurried on the fate of France, beyond the natural and inevitable progression of circumstances. His unbridled profligacy had loosened every moral restraint; and his weak belief that there was a *royal way* to national wealth, a short cut which left both industry and economy far behind, not only precipitated the ruin and confiscation of the national resources, but completed that of the honour and moral character of the people." "A Comparative View of Social Life in England and France." Vol. 1, p. 260.

than one royal mistress who appears to have been generally treated as if she were a model of propriety—to whom divines, philosophers, poets, artists, and men of science, thronged to offer homage and profess respect. This was the proper atmosphere for Voltaires and Rousseaus, and we cannot feel surprised that such intellects should have flourished in a soil so admirably adapted to their culture.

By the time Walpole had attained to manhood, the greatness of his mother's guest had extended itself very much, even beyond the vast limits which his juvenile admirers at Eton had accorded to it. Indeed, the reign of Louis XV produced no writer so widely known or generally appreciated as Voltaire; his disciples claiming for him these several distinctions—a great poet, a great critic, a great historian, and a great philosopher. The justice of this excessive liberality has, in the age that succeeded them, been pretty generally questioned, and probably Voltaire's reputation will suffer seriously from the ill effects of the exaggerated praises of his contemporaries. A few remarks are all that can be ventured upon in a subject suggestive of so much reflection as the claims to eminence of this remarkable man; and they shall be directed to each distinction with which his admiring countrymen have thought proper to invest his name.

There are few, even among the most distinguished members of the great commonwealth of literature, who have laboured so diligently over so many different

fields of thought. In tragedy we are, however, far from disposed to afford him the highest position; for the French drama of the last century can only be regarded in the light of an intellectual hybrid, half Greek, half French; neither faithfully representing the one nor the other; and fated, thank heaven, to be without the power of perpetuating its species. The dramatic works of Voltaire, though ostensibly formed on a classical model, convey as imperfect a view of society in the classic era, as they do of popular feeling in France about the period in which they appeared. They merely costume the play after the ancients, and render the dialogue a vehicle for the expression of modern thoughts and feelings.

The author of "Zaïre," severely censured Shakspere, to whose "Othello" he was under no ordinary obligations; and this attack on the best interpreter of Nature, made considerable impression on the mind of Horace Walpole. An opportunity was afforded him of entering upon this subject, when publishing a work of an imaginative character; and he referred to it in a manner that proved how little disposed he was to acknowledge the Frenchman's authority, or to allow his opinion to pass unchallenged. In this matter Walpole showed good sense and strong feelings, and though he subsequently entered into a friendly intimacy with the man whom he then so freely handled, he boldly avowed his previous hostility, and would retract nothing, and alter nothing of his previous censure.

Still the tragic plays of Voltaire possess no ordinary merit; they are indeed artificial productions; but in them the higher powers of the intellect have been taxed almost to their fullest extent.

Though they are generally poetical, it may be doubted whether they are ever poetry. In "Merope," in the "Œdipe," and in the rest of his dramatic classical works, we see not exactly an electrotype representation of the master-pieces of the dramatic genius of the Greeks, for that would be a fac-simile, but an electrotype from a badly executed copy in the French taste, of an imperfect fragment from the antique. Of one of these plays, Walpole has left us an account in his own caustic vein, which clearly expresses his opinion of Voltaire as a dramatic poet.

When in Paris in September, 1769, he writes to his friend John Chute, Esq.,

"Voltaire has published a tragedy called 'Les Guèbres.' Two Roman Colonels open the piece; they are brothers, and relate to one another, how they lately in company destroyed, by the Emperor's mandate, a city of the Guèbres, in which were their own wives and children; and they recollect that they want prodigiously to know whether both their families did perish in the flames. The son of the one and the daughter of the other are taken up for heretics, and thinking themselves brother and sister, insist upon being married, and upon being executed for their religion. The son stabs his father, who is half a Guèbre too. The high priest rants and roars. The Emperor arrives, blames the pontiff for being a persecutor, and forgives the son for assassinating his father (who does not die) because—I don't know why, but that he may marry

his cousin. The grave-diggers in Hamlet have no chance, when such a piece as the Guèbres is written agreeably to all rules and unities."*

We readily acknowledge that this does not convey an accurate idea of Voltaire's dramatic powers, any more than the latter's criticism on Shakspere contained any adequate appreciation of Shakspere's marvellous genius: nevertheless there is much in the French poet's treatment of his subject which appears to invite ridicule; and with such a critic as Walpole it was not likely that this invitation would be neglected.

In the "Henriade" and "Pucelle," his muse takes a different flight; in the first, however, it rarely soars; in the last, while maintaining a more elevated range, the impurest soil clings to its wings, and betrays the grossness of its origin.

It is as an historian that the genius of Voltaire appears to the most advantage. To his sagacity we owe that research and analysis which are found in all modern historical productions of any pretension. It used to be the fashion, which had all the sanction of a law, for a writer when engaged in illustrating any period, past or present, to take everything without examination; upon any credit, and frequently upon none. In the essay styled by him "La Pyrrhonisme de l'Histoire," Voltaire first directed public attention to the incredible statements which had hitherto passed as materials for history. The ability

* "Walpole Letters." Vol. v. p. 250.

he displayed, his profound sagacity, the boldness of his views, and the truth of his arguments, produced a lasting impression upon every historical student by whom this remarkable work was perused; and the ablest amongst them, as well in England as in France, did not disdain to profit by it. In the histories of Hume, Robertson, Gibbon, and Henry, we trace the new method of treatment—a method, however, which has since, in the labours of modern German historians, been carried to an elaborate degree of perfection, on the possibility of which neither Voltaire nor any of his immediate disciples, could have speculated. His "Siècle de Louis XIV," was in universal request very shortly after publication; it possesses numerous attractions, but he was placed too near the age he sought to delineate to be now regarded as an authority on many points of great importance. Nevertheless, we look upon it as far superior in literary merit, to his "Charles XII," or his "Peter the Great," of which the former possesses at least the pretensions of an interesting biography, written in an agreeable style; in the latter, we cannot recognize any of the higher qualities of the genius of Voltaire.

It is impossible, within the limits we can afford, to follow him step by step even, in one branch of study; but we cannot leave this imperfect sketch without referring to that singular proof of the historical qualities of his mind, his "Essai sur les Mœurs:" he there leaves an example for future

study in producing a comprehensive landscape of times and their events, with a perspective as remarkable for its fidelity as for the picturesqueness of its details.

We have now to treat of his claims as a great philosopher; and at the very outset of the enquiry, we are met by a doubt as to the genuineness of the philosophy with which his name is so intimately connected. If there are true religions and false religions, we shall not be considered extravagant in entertaining a belief of the existence of true and false philosophies. This is not the place for any lengthened discussion upon the opinions of this celebrated writer, but as he was the correspondent and personal friend of Walpole, we are bound to reserve a few pages for him in these memoirs, and incidentally cannot very well avoid dwelling on features in his productions, which seem to form so important a part of his reputation. We are neither his apologist nor accuser, but we would wish the reader to bear in mind that the religion so fiercely attacked by him was disgraced by crimes and follies,* which neither sage nor philanthropist could regard without indignation.

"Let no man," says an eminent writer of the present day, "severely condemn the untiring zeal of Voltaire, and the various forms of attack which he employed without measure against the

* Intellect shared in the common depravity, as well as rank; extreme age scarcely less than impassioned youth. Walpole's

religious institutions of his country, who is not prepared to say that he could have kept entire possession of his own temper, and never cast an eye of suspicion upon the substance of a religion thus abused, nor ever employed against its perversions the weapons of declamation and of mockery."*

From disgust of the professors to hostility to the profession, the change was easy and natural; and nothing could be more rational than for a mind of his stamp, brought into immediate contact with so much ignorance and irreligion, as then marked the priesthood of France, to take refuge in infidelity and find relief in sarcasm. That his writings have done great mischief and his example been extremely prejudicial to the cause of Christianity, there can be little doubt; still we cannot believe that he influenced public opinion more than public opinion influenced him. In any judgment to be pronounced upon his writings, it is but fair that they should be taken as a

friend, the venerable President Hénault, had many old Lotharios to keep him countenance. Among the rest a certain member of the Académie Française by name Francis Augustin Paradis di Moncrif, when nearly eighty-three, at which age he died in November, 1770, was in the habit of inviting the nymphs of the opera to the rather lofty apartments allowed him in the Tuilleries, in consequence of holding some minor appointment in the palace. "If any one of these ladies" said he, "be inclined to sup with a very brisk old man, she will have eighty-five steps to ascend, a good supper to eat, and ten louis to carry away."—"Baron de Grimm, Historical and Literary Memoirs and Anecdotes." Vol. iii. p. 86.

* Lord Brougham. "Lives of Men of Letters and Science who flourished in the time of George III." Vol. i.

whole; and the merit of what is really good and unobjectionable, should be weighed against whatever may be vicious and unsound! Among his voluminous works much will be found that is praiseworthy; and though a tendency to exaggeration pervades his thoughts and feelings, and his temper was somewhat irritable, these were the natural characteristics of a vivid imagination, joined to a feeble frame, and do not neutralize that generosity of disposition, and humanity of nature, for which among his personal friends he rendered himself remarkable.

At the particular period to which we have arrived, Voltaire was enthroned in the estimation of the Parisians, as sovereign over the realms of prose and verse. His disciples were numerous—of these much the larger portion chanced to be ladies of fashion, who imbibed his philosophy with their chocolate, and patronized his opinions as they would have done any other novelty, in an atmosphere where everything seemed to have become insufferably faded, hackneyed, and stale. His works had been extensively circulated, and were read and quoted in every circle into which they made their way. With many, doubtless, their infidelity was their greatest attraction; but it is to be hoped, few were insensible to those admirable passages by which he indicated his better intents, and put forth in a legitimate form his pretensions to the name of a scholar and man of letters.

Rousseau's career is full of curious incidents—a mosaic of the most heterogeneous materials, forming a pattern equally grand and grotesque. As Walpole is mixed up with one of the most singular of his adventures, a slight sketch of the previous history of Jean Jacques will better enable the reader to judge of the share of blame which the former incurred in this particular transaction. The Baron de Grimm knew Rousseau intimately, and has preserved many curious particulars of his life and labours. According to him he was the son of a watchmaker of Geneva, whose ungovernable passions, after driving him to commit murder, forced him to abandon his wife and family. Jean Jacques, under these unpromising circumstances, was, when a boy, received into the house of Madame de Warens, who educated him and proselytised him—in other words, deprived him of what religion he had imbibed in Geneva, and forced his mind into premature development, by a species of training which must be fresh in the recollection of the readers of his "Confessions." We next hear of him in Paris, whence he accompanied the Ambassador to Venice; but he was sooner tired of his new patron than he had been of his old patroness, and returned penniless to the French capital, resolved to push his fortune as a literary adventurer. His intellectual resources appear to have been extremely comprehensive; he composed operas, he wrote comedies, he invented a new system of musical notation, as well as a machine, no doubt equally original, for flying: and became

the secretary to the wife of a *fermier générale.* It so chanced, however, that his operas were not sung, his comedies not played; no one could write music by his notation; and nobody succeeded in flying by the help of his machine. As a climax to these miscalculations the farmer general's wife proved intractable; he therefore quitted Madame Dupin and strove to get a livelihood as a musical copyist.

Rousseau suddenly left Paris for a time to return to Geneva, where he abandoned Madame de Waren's Catholicism for what he fancied was his native Protestantism. He again returned to Paris at the end of six weeks—sometimes pursuing the trade of authorship, sometimes following the occupation of a copyist; but of too restless a spirit to be long satisfied with his position in either vocation. He hired a retired house in the forest of Montmorenci, where he acquired such a love of solitude, that on quitting it he seems to have foresworn sociality, and to have vowed to quarrel with every one who sought his friendship.

He had published books of a didactic, as well as of a philosophical character—but each disfigured by principles much more remarkable than praiseworthy. He chose to style himself a "Citizen of Geneva;" but the affection this seems to intimate for his native city was certainly not reciprocated, for its Council condemned two of his works to be burnt by the hand of the common hangman, and proclaimed their intention to punish him for the pernicious doctrines he

had there advocated, should he set foot within their walls. The Council of Berne shortly afterwards followed their example, and bade the philosopher quit their Canton. In short, the writings of Jean Jacques had excited a considerable sensation in a part of the world perhaps the least favourably disposed to entertain such speculations; and he narrowly escaped the indignation of the leading men of the Swiss Cantons, who, like their forefathers, were much too good Christians to be able to appreciate the kind of philosophy he desired to inculcate. Rousseau was far from taking this treatment patiently—he replied by an attack upon the Government, as violent as it was unprincipled, for which he was obliged to fly the country. He appeared again in Paris, where he was welcomed by his old friends, and was particularly in favour with David Hume, then enjoying unbounded respect in that capital.

Rousseau possessed one of the most ardent imaginations, destitute of any moral controlling influence. His sense of truth, of honour, and of justice may be drawn from the spirit of that passage in his "Confessions," where he fancies he makes amends for the faults and follies of which he has been guilty, by accusing himself of enormities he never thought of committing.* In some respects there is a remark-

* "Mais ici commence la grande et noble tâche que j'ai dignement remplie, d'expier mes fautes et mes foiblesses cachées, en me chargeant de fautes plus graves dont j'étois incapable, et que je ne commis jamais." "Confessions." Tom. iii. p. 120.

able similarity between Jean Jacques and a self-condemned genius of our own country, who flourished in the reign of Elizabeth; but Robert Greene profited by his confessions on more than one occasion: indeed he seems to have rung every possible change on the *carillon* of self-vilification! If there be any weight in the maxim, "self-praise is no recommendation," we may pronounce self-censure no stigma; nevertheless one cannot regard with indifference the debasement of an intellect, such as that the French philosopher was gifted with, through the most miserable of all vanities: for the true origin of all such humiliations will be found to arise from the fond conceit which urges the fanatic as well as the criminal to exaggerate their several transgressions.

Rousseau chose to exhibit the imperfections of his nature through a microscope of the highest magnifying power: he shows himself a mass of unsightly irregularities, and dwells upon them with the animation of a showman displaying the most remarkable features of some singularly attractive monstrosity. But there cannot be a doubt that his whole nature was vitiated beyond a hope of recovery. His sense of right had contracted a disease analogous to those optical maladies that clothe objects with a wrong colour, and always behold them inverted, distorted, or out of place. We shall presently have occasion to show him seeing as no one else saw, and consequently acting as no one else could have ventured to act. He, however, must be regarded as one of the natural

products of that great forcing house of unusual plants, —the French capital,—about the middle of the last century. Overheated, badly ventilated, and abandoned to ignorance and neglect, its unnatural atmosphere generated so many things of distorted form and uncouth growth, distasteful to every eye, and noxious to every sense, that we are naturally led to anticipate the coming tornado which stirred up this accumulation of noxious weeds, and scattered them to the four winds.

This, too, be it remembered, was the era of the Encyclopædists—those moral mechanics who sought to demonstrate the boast of Archimedes, and *move the world:* as far as regards the French world, they succeeded in finding the fulcrum the Syracusan might have searched for in vain, and were nearly overwhelmed by the commotion their movement created. The State and the Church were united against them. In the year 1759, the King's Council of State revoked the letters of privilege, under the sanction of which the Encyclopædia had hitherto been published; and Diderot, who, for fifteen years, had expended the energies of his intellect in this important undertaking, was prevented from proceeding with it. The ten volumes wanting to complete the work, were subsequently allowed to be published, but the printer, Le Breton, chose, while the sheets were going through the press, to cut out every passage he fancied likely to create objections, and made such wholesale mutilations in the text, that the Philosopher, when he dis-

covered what had been done, could scarcely recognise his own writings.*

Towards the close of August, 1765, Horace Walpole entertained an idea of revisiting Paris. "This will, probably," he says, "be the last time I shall travel to *finish my education.*" He anticipates with pleasure his being able to look once more at the gardens and villas of France, and adds,—"They have scarce a man or a woman of note that one wants to see; and for their authors, their style is grown so dull, in imitation of us, they are *si philosophes, si géomètres, si moraux;* that I certainly should not cross the sea in search of *ennui* that I can have in such perfection at home."† In another letter, written a few days later, to the same friend, alluding to his previous residence, he says that his greatest amusement in the visit will be reviving old ideas, and asserts that the impressions of youth are far more pleasurable than those of more recent gratifications. Notwithstanding his disparaging notions of the French, he looks forward with very lively satisfaction to an association with four or five "very agreeable and sensible people"‡—these being the Guerchys, Madame de Mirepoix, Madame de Boufflers, and Lady Mary Chabot. It was not likely that he would experience a want of English society just then, for he

* Baron de Grimm. "Historical and Literary Memoirs and Anecdotes." Vol. iii. p. 95.

† "Walpole Letters," Vol. v. p. 57.

‡ Ibid. Page 60.

intimates that among those whom he expects to meet in the French capital, are—the Duke and Duchess of Richmond, the Countesses of Carlisle and Berkeley, Lord and Lady George Lennox, Lady Mary Coke, and Sir Charles and Lady Bunbury.

His friend, Lady Hervey, gave him letters of introduction to her most distinguished Parisian acquaintances, and in making his acknowledgments to her Ladyship, he ventures to hope that his merits may not be overlooked by the French; for, as they took George Selwyn for a poet, and a judge of planting and dancing, he thinks he might reasonably expect to be taken for a learned man and a philosopher. Still he leaves it clear that he would have preferred having made his visit earlier by at least eight years, and that he thinks more of the French that have been, than of the French that are.

In the second week of September Walpole crossed the channel, and soon began to meet with adventures. To those who are aware of the present state of that part of France, the statement he makes of the marvellous improvement of Boulogne and neighbourhood, which he attributes to the prodigality of English tourists, will excite more amusement than surprise. He arrived in Paris on the 13th, and his first letters are written in high spirits. He appears enraptured with every thing but the thieves who boldly stole his portmanteau, at noon, from before his chaise, whilst he went to see Chantilly; and the dirt of the Parisians—which had long been a subject of English

animadversion. He soon grew a great favorite in the select circle to which he readily obtained access; but in a day or two his enthusiasm abated. He liked the idleness of the place, but began to be sensible of its follies and deficiencies. The French music—the French stage—he thought, had greatly deteriorated: equally so had French literature.

"The French affect philosophy," he says "literature, and free thinking; the first never did, and never will possess me; of the two others I have long been tired. Free-thinking is for one's self, surely not for society; besides one has settled one's way of thinking or knows it cannot be settled, and for others I do not see why there is not as much bigotry in attempting conversions from any religion as to it. I dined to-day with a dozen *savans*, and though all the servants were waiting, the conversation was much more unrestrained, even on the Old Testament, than I would suffer at my own table in England, if a single footman was present. For literature, it is very amusing when one has nothing else to do. I think it rather pedantic in society: tiresome when displayed professedly, and besides, in this country, one is sure it is only the fashion of the day. Their taste in it is worst of all; could one believe that when they read our authors, Richardson and Mr. Hume should be their favorites. The latter is treated here with perfect veneration. His history, so falsified in many points, so partial in as many, so very unequal in its parts, is thought the standard of writing."*

Of the authors named by Walpole it is almost impossible to say which was then most popular in France—the historian or the novelist. Among the higher orders, where infidelity was the rule, and christianity the exception, the speculative theories of Hume were generally and favourably canvassed;

* "Walpole Letters." Vol. v. p. 73.

and the philosopher himself was regarded with quite as much popularity as his writings. Neither in person nor in manners did he bear any powerful recommendations to Frenchwomen; nevertheless the toilet of a Parisian lady of fashion was thought imperfect if not graced with the broad sleek face of the English philosopher. As for the author of Sir Charles Grandison, he was so completely the rage, that the greatest geniuses of France vied with each other in the extravagance of their admiration.*

Walpole laboured under one disadvantage in his intercourse with his new friends, which caused him considerable embarrassment and annoyance. Alluding to this to Lady Hervey, he says, "the disadvantages of speaking a language worse than any idiot one meets, is insurmountable; the silliest Frenchman is eloquent to me, and leaves me embarrassed and obscure." He adds that he is in ignorance of half of what is going on around him, and the awkwardness this occasions renders him far from comfortable. At this period it may be said in excuse for him, that a perfect French scholar was a phenomenon amongst English gentlemen, and a thorough English scholar among Frenchmen was a thousand times more rare. To a mind constituted like that of Horace Walpole, being forced to remain silent in a circle of animated Frenchwomen, rendered him sufficiently uncomfort-

* "Sir Walter Scott, Prose Works." Vol. iii. p. 49.

able, to give him a distaste for the gratifications that were offered to him.*

On the second of October, Walpole was presented at Versailles. He beheld all the Royal Family of France, but only the Queen spoke to him. Her Majesty called him to her dressing-table, and seemed inclined to be communicative, but Walpole shrunk back, partly from timidity, partly from his incompetence to converse in French. Of the rest he says :—

"The King is still much handsomer than his pictures, and has great sweetness in his countenance, instead of that *farouche* look which they give him. The Mesdames are not beauties, and yet have something Bourbon in their faces. The Dauphiness I approve the least of all. The poor Dauphin is ghastly, and perishing before one's eyes."†

In another letter he describes the ceremony in still less enticing colours :—

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* He was more than once led into making ludicrous mistakes. In one instance, the Duchesse de Choiseul had desired him to forward her *du taffetas pour des coupures*—he lost no time in supplying her with *des coupures de taffetas* of various kinds. The Duchess was not more surprised than amused, when instead of a supply of court-plaister, she received several varieties of stuffs "Du taffetas pour *des coupures* ne voudroit rien dire," says his friend, alluding to this diverting blunder "mais s'il a pour des coupures, on peut bien ne pas le comprendre, si on n'en a jamais entendu parler; mais on voit bien que cela veut dire quelque chose, et on s'informe." "Letters of the Marquise du Deffand." Vol. i. p. 231.

Hume laboured under exactly the same disadvantage; nevertheless a critic of some eminence, when contrasting them, says "Walpole was a man of wit and of the world, and was much more than three-fourths French," "Edinburgh Review, January, 1847. Page 53.

† 'Walpole Letters." Vol. v. p. 75.

"You are let into the King's bedchamber" he says "just as he has put on his shirt; he dresses and talks good humoredly to a few, glares at strangers, goes to mass, to dinner, and a hunting. The good old Queen who is like Lady Primrose in the face, and Queen Caroline in the immensity of her cap, is at her dressing table, attended by two or three old ladies, who are languishing to be in Abraham's bosom, as the only man's bosom to whom they can hope for admittance. Thence you go to the Dauphin—for all is done in an hour. He scarce stays a minute, indeed, poor creature, he is a ghost, and cannot possibly last three months. The Dauphiness is in her bedchamber, but dressed and standing; looks cross, is not civil, and has the true Westphalian grace and accent. The four Mesdames, who are clumsy, plump, old wenches, with a bad likeness to their father, stand in a bed-chamber in a row, with black cloaks and knitting bags, looking good-humoured, not knowing what to say, and wriggling * * * This ceremony too, is very short; Then you are carried to the Dauphin's three boys, who you may be sure, only bow and stare. The Duke of Berry looks weak, and weak eyed; the Count de Provence, is a fine boy; the Count d'Artois well enough. The whole concludes with seeing the Dauphin's little girl dine, who is as round and as fat as a pudding."*

Of the two principal characters in this singular group, Louis XV. and the Dauphin, the former was exactly suited to a court in which he was entitled to the first place in profligacy and folly, as much as in rank and dignity. His son is said to have possessed "firmness of mind, and a solid understanding cultivated by polite letters;" † of such qualities, however, the evidence is insufficient. He certainly, more than his father, fell into the fashion of countenancing men of literary eminence, and

* "Walpole Letters." Vol. v. p. 78.

† Wraxall. "Historical Memoirs." Vol. i. p. 102.

among others, showed much attention to our countryman, Hume, with whom he entered into philosophical discussions.

The Dauphin did not long survive. He was absolutely dying at this time—nevertheless there was the most rigid attention to etiquette preserved amongst all by whom he was visited. There were two paths to his bed-side—that on the right-hand was used exclusively by the King and Queen,—that on the left being for ordinary visitors, who stopped at about six feet from the bed. The afflicted Dauphiness sat in the ante-room. The Abbé Proyart wrote a memoir of the Dauphin's death, which took place on the 8th of December, 1765.

Hume, who was well acquainted with the Court of France at this period, says:—

"The King divides his evenings every week after the following manner: one he gives to the public, when he sups at the "Grand Convert;" two he passes with his own family; two in a society of men; and to make himself amends, two he passes with ladies, Madame de Grammont usually; Madame de Mirepoix, and Madame de Beauveau."*

In another place, under the date of 15th May, 1764, he says:—

"I must inform you madam, not in the style of a *petit Ministre*, as you used to call me sometimes, but in that of a man who lives in the *grande monde*, that the journey to St. Hubert is fixed for this evening, and all the ladies named by the King who are to attend him on this critical occasion. Try your sagacity to guess them, and I shall name them afterwards; they are four, Madame de Mirepoix,

* "Private Correspondence of David Hume." Page 84.

Madame de Grammont, D'Aiguilly, and De Chateau Renaut. The two last are not supposed to be of any consequence, and Madame de de Chateau Renaut, has declined the journey on account of her health."*

The soft atmosphere of the Parisian *salons*, and the freedom of the *petit soupers*, brilliant with wax lights, and odorous with flowers, where the beauties of the capital entertained its sages, where apothegms and bon-mots, metaphysics and *double entendres* were flung about in that harmonious disorder into which skilful jugglers contrive to throw a cloud of knives and balls, at first somewhat dazzled the Lord of Strawberry. But he quickly grew used to the broad pleasantries of the wits of both sexes; the jocund chorus of the fair ministers to the banquet soon became, in his eyes, the most necessary portion of it. If, however, he felt surprise at finding himself sharing the attentions of half-a-dozen of the most brilliant *belles esprits*, with a Voltaire, a Rousseau, a D'Alembert, or a Diderot, his astonishment was not lessened at discovering that these sparkling creatures, with the highest rank in the state, possessed the least virtue that could co-exist with it.

Neither in Paris nor in Parisian society did everything long continue to Walpole *couleur de rose*. The frivolity and licentiousness were too obvious to be quite agreeable to him. To one of his friends he writes, on October 19th, 1765 :—

"Laughing is as much out of fashion as pantins or bilboquets.

* "Private Correspondence of David Hume." Page 30.

Good folks! they have no time to laugh. *There is God and the King to be pulled down first;* and men and women, one and all are devoutly employed in the demolition. They think me quite profane, for having any belief left." *

There is something like a prophecy in this description. It is plain Walpole was cognizant of that fearful state of the public feeling in France which preceded the revolution; and it is one of the many proofs he gives in the course of his voluminous correspondence of sagacity and foresight.

He describes "the philosophers"—no inactive agents in the extensive mischief then existing in France—as comprehending almost everybody, in the first place, and, in the next, men who, avowing war against Popery, aim many of them at a subversion of all religion, and many more at the destruction of regal power. Indeed, French philosophy was at this time a sort of *Aqua Tofana,* which was slowly and surely destroying the moral existence of that doomed country.

Paris does not escape Walpole's animadversions:

"Its charms," he says, "have not the least attraction for me, nor would keep me an hour on their own account. For the city itself I cannot conceive where my eyes were; it is the ugliest, beastliest town in the universe. I have not seen a mouthful of verdure out of it, nor have they anything green but their treillage and window-shutters. Trees cut into fire-shovels, and stuck into pedestals of chalk, compose their country. Their boasted knowledge of society is reduced to talking of their suppers, and every malady they have about them, or know of." *

* "Walpole Letters." Vol. v., p. 90.

† Ibid. Page 95.

Among the celebrated characters who were to be found in Paris at the period of Horace Walpole's visit was one whose fame as a letter-writer at one time bid fair to rival that of the Lord of Strawberry Hill. The Baron de Grimm is far from being unknown even in this country; on the continent, towards the close of the last century, he was held in the highest estimation, not only by men of letters, but by the rulers of Sovereign States; for the fashion which literature then had attained influenced all classes. Ladies of the highest rank maintained the best understanding with philosophers and scientific professors: Emperors and Kings rivalled each other in their solicitude to keep up a correspondence with them—in a few instances, they even condescended to enter the lists with their friends as candidates for literary fame. The career of Frederick Melchior de Grimm will convey an amusing idea of the progress of a literary adventurer in France at the period to which we are referring.

He was born at Ratisbon on the 26th of December, 1723, of poor parents, and, after receiving a respectable education in Germany, accompanied the children of Comte de Schomberg to Paris, as their tutor; next, we find him reader to the Duke of Saxe Gotha. His talents procured him the *entrée* into good society, and, having produced a bad tragedy, there seemed but one thing wanting to make his fortune in the French capital: it was absolutely indispensable that he should

distinguish himself as a man of gallantry. Poor Grimm—for he had not yet ventured on the aristocratic prefix which he subsequently placed before his name—was not a man formed by nature for making much impression on the hearts of fair ladies—his features approaching the grotesque, and his person being insignificant; nevertheless, he chose to fall in love as deeply as it was possible for a German to descend in that direction, and the object of his passion was a ballet-dancer. Whether the French Mademoiselle Fel was any relation to the famous English Doctor, her namesake, immortalised in doggrel verse, we cannot say: we only know that the feeling with which she was regarded was of so totally different a kind that her German lover, in consequence of her indifference, fell into a catalepsy which stretched him on his bed, with fixed eyes and stiffened limbs, unable to eat or to speak, and, to all appearance, perfectly unconscious.

Grimm had already obtained the friendship of some of the most eminent literary characters of France, and enjoyed the countenance of several persons of distinction. The Abbé Raynal and Rousseau anxiously watched by his bedside; Comte de Frise, nephew of Marshal Saxe, and d'Holbach, another celebrated adventurer—not unknown to the readers of the Walpole Correspondence—were equally affected by Grimm's desperate illness. All regarded it as hopeless—with one exception only: this chanced to be the patient, who, finding his catalepsy had no effect

upon his obdurate Dulcinea, very wisely opened his eyes, slackened his limbs, ate, spoke, and walked about Paris perfectly well.

In every *coterie* this extraordinary indisposition became the theme of conversation, and in a week, notwithstanding his unsatisfactory face and figure, no man in Paris was such a favourite with the sex as M. Grimm. He even took precedence of his friend Jean Jacques at the hotel of Madame d'Epinay,* and became so superlative a coxcomb that, for tinting his skin with Spanish white, the wits christened him "the tyrant *Le Blanc*." He did not neglect his literary reputation: he became known as a critic, a philosopher, and a scholar possessing the most extensive attainments. After being secretary to the Comte de Frise, he was employed in a similar capacity by the Duc d'Orleans; Diderot, d'Alembert, and the Encyclopædists, were proud of enrolling him amongst their most esteemed associates. He now assumed the name and rank of Baron *de* Grimm and under that title was known to Horace Walpole.†

* "Mémoires de Marmontel." Tome, iii. p. 211.

† "His fame travelled to other countries, which was assisted by the occupation that had devolved on him from the able hands of the Abbé Raynal of corresponding with the most enlightened of the Princes of Europe. The Empress of Russia, Frederic of Prussia, and Gustavus III, of Sweden, were the most friendly of his correspondents; and amongst these were to be found the Sovereign Princes of Germany, particularly the Duke of Saxe Gotha, by whom he was in 1776, appointed his Minister Plenipotentiary to the Court of

The streets of Paris, in 1765, presented features very different to those common to them at the present day. Servants carried their lady's train, and placed her in her carriage uncovered; and gentlemen walked the streets in the rain under umbrellas, without hats, drove about in open vehicles without them, in the rain too, when in the country; yet, in Paris, usually wore them in their carriages when it did not rain. The domestics exhibited their powdered heads the first thing in the morning, yet sometimes were seen behind the chairs of even Ducal masters with red pocket-handkerchiefs about their necks.

Of the acquaintances Walpole made among the French nobility, he describes the Duc de Praslin* as doing the honours of his own table sadly, and nothing else well, yet looking impatient and empty, while his duchess looked very vulgar, jolly, red faced and

France. The revolution breaking out made him glad to seek refuge at Saxe Gotha, whence he was called by the Empress of Russia in 1795, who gave him the post of Minister Plenipotentiary to the States of the Circle of Lower Saxony, in which he was subsequently confirmed by Paul I. Ill health however obliged him to withdraw from public business, and he took up his final residence at Gotha; where, cultivating his literary taste, he survived till the 19th of December, 1807. He had published a few unimportant productions in his life time, but his literary reputation rests upon his correspondence, which was brought out subsequently to his decease; a condensed translation of which was published in London in 4 vols. under the title of "Historical and Literary Memoirs and Anecdotes."

* Ancestor of the wretched criminal whose slaughter of his wife lately excited a feeling of horror throughout Europe.

affable. The Duc de Choiseul's face, he tells us is quite the reverse of gravity, yet does not promise much more than the other. His wife, however, is stated to be gentle, pretty, and very agreeable. The Duc de Richelieu boasted of a pale face much wrinkled, with a red nose; in another place Walpole calls him "a lean old resemblance of old General Churchill," whilst in a third he becomes "an old piece of tawdry, worn out, but endeavouring to brush itself up; and put me in mind of Lord Chesterfield, for they laugh before they know what he has said—and are in the right, for I think they would not laugh afterwards."

Although the Marshal pleased him so little, he appeared quite enraptured with his daughter, the young Countess d'Egmont who is represented as so pretty and pleasing, that if the writer thought it would break anybody's heart in England, he would be in love with her.

After giving an instance of the gross indelicacy he had met with in Parisian society, he continues:—

"Their gaiety is not greater than their delicacy; but I will not expatiate. In short they are another people from what they were. They may be growing wise, but their intermediate passage is dullness. Several of the women are agreeable, and some of the men; but the latter are in general vain and ignorant. The *savans*—I beg their pardon, the *philosophes*, are insupportable, superficial, overbearing, and fanatic; they preach incessantly, and their avowed doctrine is atheism; you would not believe how openly. Don't wonder, therefore, if I should return a Jesuit. Voltaire himself does

not satisfy them. One of their lady devotees said of him. 'Il est bigot, c'est un déiste.' "

The only male of his Parisian acquaintances, of whom Walpole speaks well upon all occasions was the Duc de Nivernois, a nobleman of high character and superior attainments, for whom he felt a sincere regard that appears to have been reciprocated by the Duke, and was shown in after years in a manner that could not fail of being agreeable to him.* M. de Nivernois was a nobleman of considerable political influence, and was sent to this country in September, 1763, with the honourable office of ambassador to treat of peace. The first night of his arrival in England, he remained one night at Canterbury, where his bills for his suite of twelve persons amounted to nearly forty-five pounds, the wine being charged at eleven shillings a bottle, for which extortion the innkeeper was deservedly reprobated by all his customers. When the Duke appeared on the Royal Exchange he was attended by an amazing crowd, which he took as a compliment. Having executed his commission, his Excellency returned to Paris on

* The Duke was once grossly libelled in a scurrilous song written by the Comte de Tressan, who subsequently paying him a visit, for the purpose of soliciting his vote when a candidate for a vacant seat in the Académie, and expressing himself rather too favourably of himself and his prospects, was thus addressed by the Duke, 'I wish you joy, sir, of your good health, of your past successes, of your new hopes, and above all of your MEMORY.' " Grimm. "Historical and Literary Memoirs and Anecdotes." Vol. iv. p. 101.

the following May with his Majesty's picture set in diamonds. He died in Paris, February 26, 1798, at the age of eighty-one, after only six days' illness, retaining to the last his taste for pleasantry, for on the day of his decease, he wrote verses on his physician.*

Whilst in England, the Duke, who was himself an author of more than ordinary merit†, collected many works in English literature, to which he was partial. At this period, indeed, English writers appear to have been in great favour in France, and every work of the least importance that made its appearance in London was sure of a speedy circulation in Paris. Baron de Grimm complains of the partiality of the French for translations.‡ Our novels, our histories, our essays, our plays were supplied to the Parisians in their own language with inconceivable rapidity. The philosophical papers of Hume in the version of the Abbé Leblanc, were not less popular than the "Peregrine Pickle" of Smollet in that of M. Toussaint. The historical works of Robertson were rivals in the favour of the Parisians with "the History of Miss Betsy Thoughtless," and while the Historical and Philological Letters of Lord Orrery upon the Life and Writings of Dean Swift, were devoured with the same avidity as Richardson's novels, Gay's "Beggar's Opera," and Butler's "Hudibras," Thomson's "Seasons," and the "Adventures of Peter Wilkins, the

* "Gentleman's Magazine." Vol. lxviii. p. 355.

† See "Ouvres Mêlées du Citoyen Mancini Nivernois." Paris, 4 vols. 4to. 1767.

‡ "Historical and Literary Memoirs and Anecdotes." Vol. i. p. 77.

"Cornishman," obtained in turn a large share of public favour. A literary Anglomania appeared to have taken possession of the French public.* Englishmen too of any note were at the same time very favourably received in Paris, which happened to possess singular attractions for English travellers about the middle of the last century. Among these, particular favour was shown to Garrick.† Gibbon, the historian, was in great request amongst them. Hume was almost idolized, and Horace Walpole honoured as a sovereign prince.

Of all the celebrated men with whom Walpole

* "We in France," says the Baron in another place, "now set as high a value upon English postillions as the English ever placed upon our poor Huguenot waiting maids; we have the same taste for their horses, their punch, and their philosophers, as they have for our wines, our liqueurs, and our opera dancers. We are not less eager to learn their language than they to learn ours; we translate all their novels, they return us the compliment with most unequalled complaisance; we are mad for their steel, they are eager for our silver; we can no longer support anything but English carriages, gardens, and swords, they cannot admire anything but our workmen, particularly our cabinet-makers and our cooks. We send them our fashions, and in return bring back theirs. Our sentimental comedies are more followed in London than at Paris, while Romeo and Beverley draw more company here than the finest tragedies of Corneille and Racine. In short we seem reciprocally to have imposed upon ourselves the task of copying each other, so as to efface entirely all vestiges of our ancient hatred." "Historical and Literary Memoirs and Anecdotes." Vol. iii. p. 239. How little such imitation went towards this object, the wars of the Consulate and of the Empire in which the two countries were so hotly engaged, sufficiently declare.

† During the period of his visit to the French capital in the year 1765, he experienced the most flattering attentions from all well-informed Frenchmen. Walpole has frequently recorded a

mingled in the French capital, no one appeared with so many claims upon his attention as his countryman, David Hume, whose popularity in Paris, was to him, one of the greatest marvels that city displayed. We cannot convey a better idea of the state of literature in both countries at this period than by introducing here a slight sketch of the career of this remarkable man. He was born at Ninewells in Berwickshire, in the year 1711, and was the youngest son of a small laird, who dying in the boy's infancy left his family but scantily provided for. Nevertheless, with that care for the welfare of their offspring which is a laudable characteristic of Scottish families of limited means, the education of David was so carefully attended to that we find his name in the matriculation book of the University of Edinburgh, when he was only in his twelfth year.* For philosophical reading he very early displayed a marked predilection, and though destined for the law, the studies of his youth led him towards a course of moral investigations and reflections which left him neither leisure nor inclination for any other pursuit.

His first appearance in the active business of life was, at the age of twenty-three, behind a counter in a Bristol warehouse; this, however, was so little in accordance with his philosophy, that before a year

depreciatory opinion of this remarkable man, and Gray was equally prejudiced against him. Abroad he met with the most enthusiastic admiration "Garrick cannot be too much extolled," says Grimm; one must see him to form any idea of his merits as a man; one must see his acting to have a true idea of what good acting is."

* "Life and Correspondence of David Hume." By John Hill Burton, Advocate. 2 vols. 8vo. Edinburgh, 1846.

had elapsed he bid a hasty adieu to all his mercantile prospects, and crossed the channel to France where with great determination and small resources, he for three years, gave himself up to metaphysical researches. In the year 1737, he was in London seeking a publisher for his "Treatise on Human Nature," the fruits of the last few years of severe thought, which, however, did not issue from the press till two years later, and then all his bold speculations and ambitious dreams fell to the ground in consequence of the neglect with which his treatise was received.

He may have been disappointed but he was not disheartened. A volume of moral and political essays published by him at Edinburgh in 1741, showed that he still hoped to make an impression on the public mind,—its complete success, quickly followed by the success equally marked of two similar volumes, proved that his anticipations were not ill-founded. These Essays soon found an extensive circulation, were translated, and created in France a sensation exceeding, perhaps, that with which they had been received in England.

Hume was now a rising man in the literary world; but his elevation was attended with many inconveniences. The opinions he had ventured to express alarmed some and enraged others, and when he became a candidate for the Ethical Chair at Edinburgh then vacant, his opponents managed to excite such an outcry, that he was once more glad to make a precipitate retreat from his prospects, and the next character he appears in is that of companion to a lunatic

nobleman living near St. Albans. Here he endured a year of degradation, which was only brought to a conclusion when Lord Annandale, in the most offensive manner, sent the philosopher about his business.

Shortly afterwards an expedition being about to leave our shores ostensibly for Canada under the command of his countryman, General Sinclair, Hume had sufficient interest to be allowed to join it, with the post of Judge Advocate. Six months of this sufficed, and a little later, he took office as secretary to his friend the General when the latter was sent on a military mission to the Courts of Austria and Piedmont. In the three years he was attached to this mission, he acquired some knowledge of diplomacy and a little money. With these qualifications he returned to his home in the north, and having after a few months' residence in Edinburgh, been appointed librarian to the Faculty of Advocates, in the thirty thousand volumes the situation placed at his disposal, he found his materials for his "History of the House of Stuart."

The first volume of his History was far from being well received, and this acted disadvantageously upon his labours in the subsequent volumes. He grew dissatisfied with the public for being dissatisfied with his work, and when it was brought to a conclusion he seemed glad to have done with a task which the longer it continued the more irksome it became.

From the Stuarts he subsequently fell back upon the Tudors, and afterwards was induced to retrograde

to the point from whence he should have started, when intending to write a History of England. His readers increased and although there were many well grounded objections to it, it was undoubtedly a remarkable work and the author lived to see it attain a popularity exceeding that of any rival production.

After a long residence in "the modern Athens" in which he sought to become as much its Alcibiades as its Socrates, his ambition urged him southward, and in 1758 he took lodgings in London; but the obscurity to which he was left in a place where he had so few friends, after the distinction which had so long been accorded to him in the Scottish metropolis, could not have been an agreeable change, and therefore we are not surprised to learn that before a twelvemonth had elapsed, he had removed to Paris.

Many circumstances conspired to render his appearance in the French capital at this particular period, an event of unusual importance. His metaphysical works had found numerous admirers in France, and amidst the general infidelity that prevailed in what was called the polite world, the peculiar strength and pungency of his unbelief, formed his strongest recommendation. His bold attacks upon Christianity were read in Paris in a frenzy of admiration: the Beauties, the Wits, the Philosophers—the three great orders into which French society was then divided—strove to excel each other in the warmth of their appreciation of such congenial arguments. By the first he was literally welcomed with open arms. If we may take

Lord Charlemont as an authority, few men could in person have presented features so little attractive to the eyes of a Frenchwoman—an inexpressive countenance, upon a figure like a tub, occasionally animated to speak bad French with a broad Scottish accent, made an extremely indifferent pretender to the favour of the Parisian fair: yet the awkward philosopher was in greater request amongst them than was the most irresistible lady-killer of which Paris then could boast. "They believe in Mr. Hume," wrote Walpole to one of his friends, "the only thing in the world that they believe implicitly; which they must do, for I defy them to understand any language which he speaks."

A tolerable idea of his unfitness for the gay circle in which he found himself, "the cynosure of neighbouring eyes," may be gathered from the account of him which has been preserved by Madame de l'Epinay. He was in the habit of joining in their amusements, and on one occasion was to represent an Eastern Sultan, with the two loveliest women in Paris seated on each side of him on a sofa, as captives, who were to be won by his beguiling tongue. Whether the philosopher had ever been a lover is not known—his conception of the character was comprised in a stolid look at each fair one, a curious thumping of his knees and stomach, and a repetition of "*Eh bien! mes demoiselles. Eh bien! vous voilà donc; eh bien! vous voilà, vous voilà ici?*" The Sultan was of course soon deposed: yet though he failed so egregiously in his gallantry,* his philosophy retained its influence over

* His fair admirers playfully nick-named him *Le Paysan du Danube*. See "Fables de la Fontaine." Fab. 211.

his fair worshippers, and the fondness of the *belles esprits* for his society, astonished quite as much as it amused Walpole.

D'Alembert, Diderot, Helvetius, and Voltaire, distinguished themselves by the warmth of their regard for the English philosopher.* The impassioned Rousseau affected to entertain for him the most enthusiastic attachment, and all the *literati* thronged around him as round an idol, to whom the agreeable Comtesse de Boufflers, and the generous Madame Geoffrin—two of the most fashionable women in Paris, insisted on fulfilling the duties of High Priestesses. Hume found his ambitious aspirations more than realized, and was in the best possible humour with everything and everybody that appertained to a nation so discriminative.

At this period Rousseau, against whom the Parliament had issued an *arrêt*, for certain opinions expressed by him, gladly sought refuge in England, under the auspices of his friend Hume. Walpole's opinion of this distinguished writer was not very high —in short he stigmatises him as a *charlatan*, and anticipated a quarrel between the two philosophers. In the midst of the stir which Rousseau and his banishment occasioned, the good people of the French capital

* Helvetius died near the close of the year 1771, at the comparatively early age of fifty-six, and so high was he in the regard of his contemporaries, that the Baron de Grimm affirms the term "perfect gentleman" must have been invented as a distinction exclusively his own. His celebrated work, "De l'Esprit," attracted attention both in England and in France, and Walpole refers to it more than once. He paid a visit to this country after the peace in 1763, which served to increase the good opinion with which he appears to have regarded its people and institutions.

were much surprised by the publication of a letter to the exile, from no less a personage than the King of Prussia.—Yes, it was found that the great Frederick, who sometimes fancied that he could appreciate men of genius almost as highly as grenadiers, had addressed the philosopher in the following words :—

LE ROI DE PRUSSE A MONSIEUR ROUSSEAU.

"Mon cher Jean Jacques,

"Vous avez renoncé à Génève votre patrie ; vous vous êtes fait chasser de la Suisse, pays tant vanté dans vos écrits ; la France vous a décreté. Venez donc chez moi ; j'admire vos talens ; je m'amuse de vos rêveries, qui (soit dit en passant) vous occupent trop, et trop long tems. Il faut à la fin être sage et heureux. Vous avez fait assez parler de vous par des singularités peu convenables à un véritable grand homme. Démontrez à vos ennemis que vous pouvez avoir quelquefois le sens commun ; cela les fachera sans vous faire tort. Mes états vous offrent une retraite paisible ; je vous veux du bien, et je vous en ferai, si vous le trouvez bon. Mais si vous vous obstiniez à rejetter mon secours, attendez-vous que je ne le dirai à personne. Si vous persistez à vous creuser l'esprit pour trouver de nouveaux malheurs, choisissez les tels que vous voudrez. Je suis Roi ; je puis vous en procurer au gré de vos souhaits ; et ce qui sûrement ne vous arrivera pas vis-à-vis de vos ennemis, je cesserai de vous persécuter quand vous cesserez de mettre votre gloire à l'être

"Votre bon ami,

"FREDERIC."

Some may have been mystified, but the true nature of the document was readily discovered in a place where jest had been made out of much more serious materials. It began to transpire that the great Conqueror's confidential communication to the great Philosopher was not only a hoax, but, more marvellous than all, a hoax invented by an Englishman,

It appears that Walpole, notwithstanding he had to deal with a language with which he was imperfectly acquainted, had allowed the invention that had so often amused the English metropolis with similar drolleries, to make a trial of its powers for the amusement of another circle. At Madame Geoffrin's he had entertained the company at the expense of the Philosopher with such success that he was induced to have recourse to his pen, with a similar object. The Duc de Nivernois and Helvetius were favoured with a sight of this *jeu d'esprit,* and their encouragement led to its being submitted to the public. As the writer says, "it made incredible noise." It was widely circulated in France, and appeared in some of the newspapers in England. In one of the latter, it attracted the attention of Jean Jacques himself very soon after his appearance in England, where he was masquerading himself in an Armenian dress, and he wrote in the following terms :—

ROUSSEAU TO THE EDITOR OF THE LONDON CHRONICLE.

"You have failed, sir, in the respect which every private person owes to a crowned head, in attributing publicly to the King of Prussia a letter full of extravagance and malignity, of which for these very reasons, you ought to have known he could not be the author. You have even dared to transcribe his signature, as if you had seen it written with his own hand. I inform you, sir, this letter was fabricated in Paris; and what rends my heart is, that the impostor has accomplices in England. You owe to the King of Prussia, to truth, and to me, to print the letter which I write to you, and which I sign, as an atonement for a fault with which you would doubtless reproach yourself severely, if you knew to what a dark transaction you have rendered yourself accessory.

"I salute you, sir, very sincerely,

"ROUSSEAU."

Walpole's estimate of the durability of the friendship of Rousseau and Hume soon proved as correct as were most of his anticipations. The English philosopher had hardly succeeded in obtaining for his French friend a handsome pension from his Sovereign, and an agreeable residence from one of his friends, when the latter began to show a determination, not only to quarrel with his fortune, but with his friend. The fictitious letter of the King of Prussia was a dreadful wound to his self-love: like a subtile poison, it disturbed his circulation, and changed his nature to a morbid state of fretfulness and suspicion bordering on insanity, which made him see offence where none was thought of, and evil where none was likely to exist. He firmly believed that the concocter of the forgery had confederates both in England and France, and he had somehow or other got the impression that the most active of them was his brother philosopher, to whom he owed such heavy obligations.

Voltaire found himself involved in the quarrel, as Rousseau thought proper to accuse him of having had him condemned at Geneva, and of causing him to be driven from Switzerland. "He is the most malignant madman that exists," said Voltaire. "An ape that bites the person that feeds it is more reasonable and humane."

Rousseau was assured that Hume had had a hand in the composition of the offensive letter—nay, had suggested the most pungent phrases. This the latter

not only denied, but felt regret at its publication. In a letter to the Countess of Boufflers, he says :—

"I suppose that by this time you have learned that it was Horace Walpole who wrote the Prussian letter you mentioned to me. It is a strange inclination we have to be wits preferably to everything else. He is a very worthy man; he esteems and even admires Rousseau; yet he could not forbear, for the sake of a very indifferent joke, the turning him into ridicule, and saying harsh things against him. I am a little angry with him; and I hear you are a great deal; but the matter ought to be treated only as a piece of levity."*

Rousseau, however, was not to be so easily satisfied. His conduct became most extravagant: he wrote an abusive letter to his brother philosopher, and denounced him to his friends as one who planted a dagger in his breast, and redoubled his blows.† Hume, of course was not silent—the Damon and Pythias of philosophy now spoke of each other in the most contemptible terms : "*Jean Jacques est un Scélérat,*" said Hume ; "*Vous êtes un traitre,*" replied Rousseau, with equal bitterness.

In less than twelve months, Hume's opinion of his celebrated contemporary had undergone a complete alteration. The man who, in December, 1765, had been described by him as superior to Socrates, was in the following October stigmatised as "a compo-

* "Private Correspondence of David Hume." Page 170.

† "Quoi, madame!" he writes to Madame de Boufflers. "quand un homme vient, entre quatre yeux, m'enfoncer à coups redoublés un poignard dans le sein, il faut, avant d'oser lui dire qu'il me frappe, que j'aille au loin demander, aux autres, s'il m'a frappé?" "Private Correspondence of David Hume." Page 214.

sition of whim, affectation, wickedness, vanity, and inquietude, with a very small, if any, ingredient of madness. These ruling qualities, together with ingratitude, ferocity, and lying, make up the whole of his composition."*

Finally, after threatening a publication which was to cover his enemies with disgrace, Rousseau absconded from the respectable residence which had been procured for him, and wandered about the country, occasionally writing incoherent letters to those persons who had befriended him since his arrival in the country; and at last crossed the channel, to the satisfaction of almost every one on this side of it. His affair excited a good deal of attention in the public prints, and even employed the talent of a caricaturist. Hume says that, in a print published at this period,

"Rousseau is represented as a yahoo newly caught in the woods; I am represented as a farmer who caresses him, and offers him some oats to eat, which he refuses in a rage; Voltaire and d'Alembert are whipping him up behind, and Horace Walpole making him horns of *papier mâché*."†

During his residence in Paris, Walpole left off dinners, but sat up late, partook of a fashionable supper, and played at loo with the Court ladies, lying late in bed the next day, till he was ready to commence the same round of unprofitable pleasure. On one occasion, he says:—

"My last new passion, and I think the strongest, is the Duchess de Choiseul. Her face is pretty—not very pretty; her person a little

* "Life and Correspondence of David Hume." By John Hill Burton, Advocate.

† Private Correspondence of David Hume." Page 234.

model. Cheerful, modest, full of attentions, with the happiest propriety of expression, and greatest quickness of reason and judgment; you would take her for the queen of an allegory; one dreads its finishing, as much as a lover, if she would admit one, would wish it should finish."*

Walpole had already gone through a considerable portion of his education, as "a fine gentleman," but Paris was the university where he must matriculate, and with court beauties for professors, and *belles esprits* for examiners, it is not strange so promising a scholar should have taken a high degree. How many courses he attended of idleness and dissipation—how many *dis*-courses he attended of frivolity and irreligion—how regular he was in his irregularity—and how discreet in his indiscretions, his correspondence of the period will indicate to the reader. We here can only introduce him to some of the most distinguished of those associates whose precepts and example were so prominently put forth for his instruction. Among his female acquaintance in Paris, Walpole appears to have been most charmed by Madame Geoffrin, a lady of excellent character, to whom he had been recommended by Lady Hervey. He soon became a great favourite with her, and she styled him "le nouveau Richelieu." The most remarkable of the doings of this remarkable woman, was her undertaking, at the age of sixty-eight, to travel to Warsaw; which journey she accomplished in the year 1766, taking Vienna in her way, where she experienced a very flattering reception. She had many good qualities,—not the

* "Walpole Letters." Vol. v. p. 116.

least popular with those who sought her society, was her hospitality—her "regular dinners," as Gibbon describes them, attracting the best company in Paris: but she had other virtues which were appreciated at least by some of the eminent men of letters, whom she was in the habit of entertaining. Baron de Grimm, says of her, "That her religion seems to have been founded on two principles; to do the greatest degree of good in her power; and to respect scrupulously all established catechisms, and conforming with the utmost courtesy to the numerous variations of such matters that are continually taking place."*

She was held in great estimation by her literary contemporaries, and by none esteemed more than by De Fontenelle, who appointed her executrix under his will.† De Mairan, a philosophical writer of the highest scientific attainments, also left her his sole legatee. In this way she received property to the amount of a hundred thousand livres, which she nobly distributed among his relatives as

* Vol. i. p. 345.

† The Baron has preserved a curious anecdote of De Fontenelle, which is eminently characteristic of French Philosophy. An intimate friend was invited to dine on his favourite dish, asparagus dressed in oil; but as the vegetable in this manner was not to his friend's taste, he, as a particular sacrifice to friendship, directed his cook to dress half the quantity one way and half the other. Scarcely had he made this arrangement when his dear friend fell down in an apoplectic fit, and Fontenelle running, to the stairs, hastily cried out to his cook—"*All with oil! all with oil!*"

soon as it came into her possession. Her benevolence is represented as having been on a scale so extensive, that at the present day we find a difficulty in believing in its existence. To men of letters she was munificent—providing many with handsome incomes, placing large sums at the disposal of others, and paying them visits at their dwellings expressly to discover if they stood in need of any thing. In short, if these accounts be true, so generous, so untiring a benefactress as Madame Geoffrin, the world has never seen before or since. The Baron de Grimm relates many instances of the munificent spirit that possessed this excellent lady. He also accords to her the merit of having remonstrated with Mademoiselle de L'Espinasse on the prejudicial effect of her influence over the philosopher D'Alembert, and of having induced her to give up his letters as well as to promise never to see him again. From the Baron's account it is clear she had so much to do for other people, that her duties at home were very much in arrears.

"What have you done Madame," exclaimed one of her foreign visitors, who had been several times invited to her sumptuous entertainments, "What have you done with the poor man whom I always used to see here, and who never spoke a word?"

"Oh!" exclaimed the lady, with the *sang froid* of a Frenchwoman of the age of Louis XV, "that was my husband—he is dead."

On her being attacked by a serious malady, her

daughter the Marchioness de la Ferté-Imbault refused d'Alembert, Marmontel, the Abbe Morellet, and her mother's other old friends admission to the house; as soon as she grew better, the old lady was at first desirous of their having free access to her whenever they pleased, but finally coincided in their exclusion. She died in the year 1777.

At the house of Madame du Deffand, for an introduction to whom he was indebted to his friend George Selwyn, Walpole made the acquaintance of the celebrated author of the "Abrégé Chronologique de l'Histoire de France,"* immortalized by Voltaire, by the epitaph commencing,—

> "Hénault, fameux par vos soupers,
> Et votre 'Chronologie,' &c."

His suppers were in greater favour than his book, for he was considered to possess the best cook in the French capital, which attracted to his table all the celebrities of the age. He held the post of "Surintendant de la maison de Mademoiselle la Dauphine," and was a member of l'Académie Française and l'Académie des Inscriptions. Walpole describes him as very nearly deaf, and more nearly superannuated; and rudely referring to the scandal respecting his intimacy with Madame du Deffand, adds "The mistress of the house, who formerly was his, inquires after every dish on the table, is told

* His "Chronology" was a very indifferent performance. He also wrote one or two tragedies: they were worse than his "Chronology;" nevertheless Voltaire, in writing to the author, refers to one as "votre charmante, votre immortal ouvrage."

who has eaten of which, and then bawls the bill of fare of every individual into the President's ears."*

This curious proceeding went on in the company of many females of distinction, particularly the Duchess de la Vallière and the Countess de Forcalquier, two of the handsomest ladies of the Court, with whom Walpole, notwithstanding his deficiency in their language, appears very soon to have become familiar—at least so we are left to infer from his unceremonious way of calling them "the women." It happened, as we have said, fortunately for him, to be the fashion in Paris to encourage men of letters, particularly if their talent lay in the way of *l'esprit* or *la philosophie*—and some ladies thought proper to carry

* The Baron de Grimm does not convey to us a very favourable portrait either of the ancient president or of his venerable mistress. His estimate of the talents of the gentleman is very humble, but he had been a man of fashion in his youth, was polished and urbane in his old age, and gave excellent suppers to his friends. The Baron's estimate of the lady if not more humble, is less favourable. He lays great stress on her powers of sarcasm, and her detestation of philosophers. Charles John Francis Hénault, Honorary President of the Parliament, died November 24th, 1776, in the eighty-sixth year of his age. He received company on his death-bed, according to the French fashion, and among others came the lady of his affections, then more than seventy years old, who had been blind upwards of twenty years, when she roused him out of his lethargy by bawling into his ear an inquiry after a certain Madame de Castelmoron, who had formerly been her rival, and, without recognizing his questioner, he began to gossip about the lady named, whom, he made it clearly understood, he greatly preferred to Madame du Deffand; and thus recurring to his conquests, the President Hénault, no doubt to the edification of his numerous friends, kept babbling of his good fortune, till his revelations were silenced by death. "Historical and Literary Memoirs and Anecdotes." Vol iii. p. 90.

their encouragement to a height that might have seriously compromised their reputations, had they possessed any. Others satisfied themselves with entering into a sentimental and philosophical correspondence with the objects of their preference; and to this fancy we are indebted for the letters of Madame de Boufflers to Hume and Rousseau; and those of the Marquise du Deffand to Horace Walpole and Voltaire.

Whilst Walpole was in Paris, his cousin, General Conway, proposed to him to visit Naples together; but Horace was, or affected to be sick of foreign countries, and expressed his determination to return home as soon as the season would permit. This humour, however, did not last very long. Scarcely had the new year commenced when we find him stating "France is so agreeable, and England so much the reverse, that I don't know when I shall return." By this time he had become extremely fashionable in Paris: indeed he says, "The civilities, the kindnesses, the honours I receive, are so many and so great, that I am continually forced to put myself in mind how little I am entitled to them."* Under these new lights, he became satisfied that Madame Geoffrin was the most rational woman in the world, and that Madame d'Aiguillon was the most animated and the most obliging—as readily he became convinced that he was the centre of attraction to the handsomest women in France; more than this,—he as confidently asserted that they were the most respectable in point

* "Walpole Letters." Vol. v. p. 116.

of character. His prejudices against France and Frenchmen were modified to a very great extent, whilst such of the ladies who were so fortunate as to have been favoured by his praise, were now eulogised beyond the limits even of French compliment. We cannot do better than transfer to our pages an extremely characteristic letter, written at this period to his affectionate friend Gray, which shows how completely he had been flattered into thinking, as well as doing the agreeable towards his French friends.

"HORACE WALPOLE TO GRAY.

"Paris, January 25th 1766.

"I am much indebted to you for your kind letter and advice; and though it is late to thank you for it, it is at least a strong proof that I do not forget it. However, I am a little obstinate, as you know, on the chapter of health, and have persisted through this Siberian winter in not adding a grain to my clothes, and in going open-breasted without an under waistcoat. In short, though I like extremely to live, it must be in my own way as long as I can; it is not youth I court, but liberty, and I think making one's self tender is issuing a *general warrant* against one's own person. I suppose I shall submit to confinement when I cannot help it; but I am indifferent enough to life not to care if it ends soon after my prison begins.

"I have not delayed so long to answer your letter from not thinking of it, or from want of matter, but from want of time; I am constantly occupied, engaged, amused, till I cannot bring a hundredth part of what I have to say into the compass of a letter. You will lose nothing by this; you know my volubility when I am full of new subjects; and I have at least many hours of conversation for you at my return. One does not learn a whole nation in four or five months; but, for the time, few I believe, have seen, studied, or got so much acquainted with the French as I have.

"By what I said of their religious, or rather irreligious opinions you must not conclude their people of quality atheists—at least not

the men. Happily for their poor souls, they are not capable of going so far into thinking! They assent to a great deal because it is the fashion, and because they don't know how to contradict. They are ashamed to defend the Roman Catholic religion because it is quite exploded; but I am convinced they believe it in their hearts. They hate the Parliaments and the philosophers, and are rejoiced that they may still idolize royalty. At present, too, they are a little triumphant: the Court has shown a little spirit, and the Parliaments much less: but as the Duc de Choiseul, who is very fluttering, unsettled, and inclined to the philosophers, has made a compromise with the Parliament of Bretagne, the Parliaments might venture out again, if, as I fancy will be the case, they are not glad to drop a cause of which they began to be a little weary of the inconveniences.

"The generality of the men, and more than the generality, are dull and empty. They have taken up gravity, thinking it was philosophy and English, and so have acquired nothing in the room of their natural levity and cheerfulness. However, as their high opinion of their own country remains, for which they can no longer assign any reason; they are contemptuous and reserved, instead of being ridiculously, consequently pardonably, impertinent. I have wondered, knowing my own countrymen, that we had attained such a superiority. I wonder no longer, and have a little more respect for English *heads* than I had.

"The women do not seem of the same country: if they are less gay than they were, they are more informed—enough to make them very conversable. I know six or seven with very superior understandings; some of them with wit, or with softness, or very good sense.

"Madame Geoffrin, of whom you have heard much, is an extraordinary woman, with more common sense than I almost ever met with. Great quickness in discovering characters, penetration in going to the bottom of them, and a pencil that never fails in a likeness—seldom a favourable one. She exacts and preserves, spite of her birth and their nonsensical prejudices about nobility, great court and attention. This she acquires by a thousand little arts and offices of friendship, and by a freedom and severity which seem

to be her sole end of drawing a concourse to her, for she insists on scolding those she inveigles to her. She has little taste and less knowledge, but protects artisans and authors, and courts a few people to have the credit of serving her dependents. She was bred under the famous Madame Tencin, who advised her never to refuse any man; for, said her mistress, though nine in ten should not care a farthing for you, the tenth may live to be an useful friend. She did not adopt or reject the whole plan, but fully retained the purport of the maxim. In short, she is an epitome of empire subsisting by rewards and punishments. Her great enemy Madame du Deffand, was, for a short time, mistress of the Regent, is now very old and stone blind, but retains all her vivacity, wit, memory, judgment, passions, and agreeableness. She goes to operas, plays, suppers, and Versailles; gives suppers twice a-week; has everything new read to her; makes new songs and epigrams, ay admirably, and remembers every one that has been made these fourscore years. She corresponds with Voltaire, dictates charming letters to him, contradicts him, is no bigot to him or anybody, and laughs both at the clergy and the philosophers. In a dispute, into which she easily falls, she is very warm, and yet scarce ever in the wrong; her judgment on every subject is as just as possible, on every point of conduct as wrong as possible; for she is all love and hatred, passionate for her friends to enthusiasm, still anxious to be loved—I don't mean by lovers,—and a vehement enemy, but openly. As she can have no amusement but conversation, the least solitude and *ennui* are insupportable to her, and put her into the power of several worthless people, who eat her suppers when they can eat nobody's of higher rank; wink to one another, and laugh at her; hate her because she has forty times more parts, and venture to hate her because she is not rich. She has an old friend whom I must mention, a Monsieur Pontdeveyle,* author of the 'Fat Puni,' and the

* Monsieur de Pontdeveyle, the younger brother of the Marquis d'Argental, the friend of Voltaire and the King of Prussia. Their mother, Madame de Ferioles, was sister to the celebrated Madame de Tencin, and to the Cardinal of the same name. He died in 1774. "Walpole Letters." Vol. v. p. 125.

'Complaisant,' and of those pretty novels the 'Comte de Cominge,' the 'Siege of Calais,' and 'Les Malheurs de l'Amour.'* Would not you expect this old man to be very agreeable? He can be so, but seldom is; yet he has another very different and very amusing talent—the art of parody, and is unique in his kind. He composes tales to the tunes of long dances; for instance, he has adapted the Regent's Daphnis and Chloe to one, and made it ten times more indecent; but is so old, and sings it so well, that it is permitted in all companies. He has succeeded still better in 'Les Caractères de la Danse,' to which he has adapted words that express all the characters of love. With all this he has not the least idea of cheerfulness in conversation; seldom speaks but on grave subjects, and not often on them; is a humourist, very supercilious, and wrapt up in admiration of his own country, as the only judge of his merit. His air and look are cold and forbidding, but ask him to sing, or praise his works, his eyes and smiles open and brighten up. In short, I can show him to you: the self-applauding poet in Hogarth's 'Rake's Progress,' the second print, is so like his very features and very wig, that you would know him by it if you came hither—for he certainly will not go to you.

"Madame de Mirepoix's understanding is excellent, of the useful kind, and can be so when she pleases of the agreeable kind. She has read but seldom shows it, and has perfect taste. Her manner is cold, but very civil; and she conceals even the blood of Lorrain, without ever forgetting it. Nobody in France knows the world better, and nobody is personally so well with the King. She is false, artful, and insinuating beyond measure when it is her interest, but indolent and a coward. She never had any passion but gaming, and always loses. For ever paying court, the sole produce of a life of art, is to get money from the King to carry on a course of paying debts, or contracting new ones, which she discharges as fast as she is able. She advertised devotion to get made *dame du palais* to the Queen; and the very next day this Princess of Lorrain was seen

* This work is attributed by Madame du Deffand to Madame de Tencin.

riding backwards with Madame Pompadour, in the latter's coach. When the King was stabbed, and heartily frightened, the mistress took a panic, too, and consulted d'Argenson* whether she had not best make off in time. He hated her, and said 'by all means.' Madame de Mirepoix advised her to stay. The King recovered his spirits, d'Argenson was banished, and La Maréchale inherited part of the mistress's credit—I must interrupt my history of illustrious women, with an anecdote of Monsieur de Maurepas with whom I am much acquainted, and who has one of the few heads which approach to good ones, and who luckily for us, was disgraced, and the Marine dropped, because it was his favourite object and province. We employed Pontdeveyle to make a song on the Pompadour. It was clever and bitter, and did not spare even Majesty. This Maurepas was absurd enough to sing at supper at Versailles.† Banishment ensued, and lest he should ever be restored, the mistress persuaded the King that he had poisoned her predecessor Madame de Chateauroux. Maurepas is very agreeable, and exceedingly cheerful, yet I have seen a transient silent cloud when politics are talked of.

"Madame de Boufflers who was in England, is a *savante* mistress of the Prince of Conti; and very desirous of being his wife. She is two women—the upper and the lower: I need not tell you

* "Le Comte d'Argenson was Minister-at-War, and after Damien's attempt upon the King of France, in 1757, was disgraced, and exiled to his country-house at Ormes, in Poitou. He was brother to the Marquis d'Argenson, who had been Minister of Foreign Affairs, and died in 1756. He it was who is said to have addressed M. Bignon, his nephew, afterwards an Academician, upon conferring upon him the appointment of librarian to the king, 'Mon neveu, voilà une belle occasion pour apprendre à lire.'" "Walpole Letters." Vol. v., p. 126.

† Le Comte de Maurepas, who was married to a sister of the Duc de la Vallière, had been Minister of Marine, and disgraced, as Walpole says, at the instigation of the reigning mistress, Madame de Pompadour; but upon the death of Louis XV., was immediately summoned to assist in the formation of the ministry of his successor.

that the lower is gallant, and still has pretensions. The upper is very sensible, too, and has a measured eloquence that is just and pleasing—but all is spoiled by an unrelaxed attention to applause. You would think she was always sitting for her picture to her biographer.

"Madame de Rochfort is very different from all the rest. Her understanding is just and delicate: with a finesse of wit, that is the result of reflection. Her manner is soft and feminine; and, though a *savante*, without any declared pretensions. She is the *decent* friend of Monsieur de Nivernois, for you must not believe a syllable of what you read in their novels. It requires the greatest curiosity, or the greatest habitude, to discover the smallest connexion between the sexes here—No familiarity, but under the veil of friendship is permitted, and Love's Dictionary is as much prohibited, as at first sight one should think his ritual was. All you hear and that pronounced with nonchalance is, that *Monsieur un tel* has had *Madame une telle*. The Duc de Nivernois has parts, and writes at the top of the mediocre, but, as Madame Geoffrin says, is *manqué par tout, guerrier manqué, ambassadeur manqué, homme d'affaires manqué*, and *auteur manqué*—no, he is not *homme de naissance manqué*. He would think freely, but has some ambition of being governor to the Dauphin, and is more afraid of his wife and daughter, who are ecclesiastic fagots. The former out-chatters the Duke of Newcastle; and the latter, Madame de Gisors, exhausts Mr. Pitt's eloquence in defence of the Archbishop of Paris. Monsieur de Nivernois lives in a small circle of dependent admirers, and Madame de Rochfort is high priestess for a small salary of credit.

"The Duchess of Choiseul, the only young one of these heroines, is not very pretty but has fine eyes, and is a little model in wax-work, which not being allowed to speak for some time as incapable, has a hesitation and modesty, the latter of which the Court has not cured, and the former of which is atoned for by the most interesting sound of voice, and forgotten in the most elegant turn and propriety of expression. Oh, it is the gentlest, amiable, civil little creature that ever came out of a fairy egg. So just in its phrases and thoughts, so attentive and good natured! Everybody loves it but its husband, who prefers his own sister the Duchesse de Grammont,

an Amazonian, fierce, haughty dame who loves and hates arbitrarily, and is detested. Madame de Choiseul, passionately fond of her husband, was the martyr of this union, but at last submitted with a good grace; has gained a little credit with him, and is still believed to idolize him. But I doubt it—she takes too much pains to profess it.

"I cannot finish my list without adding a much more common character—but more complete in its kind than any of the foregoing—the Maréchale de Luxembourg. She has been very handsome, very abandoned, and very mischievous. Her beauty is gone, her lovers are gone, and she thinks the devil is coming. This dejection has softened her into being rather agreeable, for she has wit and good breeding; but you would swear by the restlessness of her person, and the horrors she cannot conceal, that she had signed the compact, and expected to be called upon in a week for the performance. I could add many pictures, but none so remarkable. In those I send you, there is not a feature bestowed gratis or exaggerated. For the beauties, of which there are a few considerable, as Mesdames de Brionne, de Monaco, et d'Egmont, they have not yet lost their characters nor got any.

"You must not attribute my intimacy with Paris to curiosity alone. An accident unlocked the door for me. That *passe par-tout* called the fashion, has made them fly open—and what do you think was that fashion?—I myself. Yes, like Queen Elinor in the ballad, I sunk at Charing Cross, and have risen at the Fauxbourg St. Germain. A *plaisanterie* on Rousseau, whose arrival here in his way to you, brought me acquainted with many anecdotes conformable to the idea I had conceived of him, got about, was liked much more than it deserved, spread like wildfire, and made me the subject of conversation. Rousseau's devotees were offended. Madame de Bouffleurs, with a tone of sentiment, and the accents of lamenting humanity, abused me heartily, and then complained to myself with the utmost softness. I acted contrition, but had like to have spoiled it all, by growing dreadfully tired of a second lecture from the Prince of Conti, who took up the ball, and made himself the hero of a history, wherein he had nothing to do. I listened, did not understand half he said (nor he neither); forgot the

rest; said yes, when I should have said no; yawned when I should have smiled; and was very penitent when I should have rejoiced at my pardon. Madame de Boufflers was more distressed, for he owned twenty times more than I had said; she frowned, and made him signs; but she had wound up his clack, and there was no stopping it. The moment she grew angry the lord of the house grew charmed, and it has been my fault if I am not at the head of a numerous sect; but when I left a triumphant party in England, I did not come hither to be at the head of a fashion. However, I have been sent for about like an African prince, or a learned canary bird. * * * Thank the Lord! though this is the first month, it is the last week of my reign; and I shall resign my crown with great satisfaction to a *bouillie* of chestnuts which is just invented, and whose annals will be illustrated by so many indigestions that Paris will not want anything else these three weeks. I will enclose the fatal letter after I have finished this enormous one, to which I will only add, that nothing has interrupted my Sevigné researches, but the frost. The Abbé de Malesherbes has given me full power to ransack Livry. I did not tell you that, by great accident, when I thought on nothing less, I stumbled on an original picture of the Comte de Grammont. Adieu! You are generally in London in March; I shall be there by the end of it.

"Yours, ever."

Of the gallery of celebrated Frenchwomen of the last century, thus graphically presented to the reader, we must give the first place, not to the lady first mentioned by the writer, but to her who excelled her fair contemporaries in admiration of him. This was of course, the venerable enthusiast, the antiquated *bel esprit*, the Marquise du Deffand, whose lengthened correspondence, and tender intimacy with the object of her regard, have procured her a reputation, not less extended than would have been obtained for her, had she, at the date of their composition rivalled the

loveliest and most youthful among her celebrated countrywomen. She was born in the year 1697, and was a member of a noble Burgundian family; her eldest brother, the Comte de Vichy Chamrond, rose to the rank of Maréchal de Camp—her younger brother sought honours in a different profession, and with the title of Abbé Chamrond became Trésorier de la Sainte Chapelle at Paris, near which city he lived at a place called Montrouge. Their grandmother was Marie Boutillier de Chavigny, wife of César Auguste, Duc de Choiseul; the Duchess de Luynes, the favourite of the Queen of Louis XV., was her aunt, and Brienne de Loménie, Archbishop of Toulouse, and subsequently Cardinal de Loménie, popularly nicknamed *le Cardinal de l'Ignominie*, was her great nephew. Márie had other great relations and powerful connexions in church, state, and the army; so that after a conventual education in Paris, in the course of which she imbibed so much *irreligion* that it was found necessary to call in the eloquent Massillon, to clear her mind of the infidelity she had imbibed from the pious Sisters of La Madeleine de Trenelle, in the Rue de Charonne—in which, however, he did not succeed—Mademoiselle de Chamrond found herself, on entering the world, not only as young and beautiful as any Frenchwoman could desire to be, but with as many friends at Court as must have satisfied the aspirations of the most ambitious of her female acquaintances.

The great object of female education in France at this period, as far as regarded young ladies of family,

appears to have been to prepare them for a Court career; and we are bound to say the system was admirably adopted to fulfil its object. Walpole speaks of the "freethinking" of the most celebrated of his fair friends, and does not leave us a doubt that their acting was equally free. Nevertheless, it is but justice to add, that the friends of the young ladies had a proper regard for appearances, though they did not show this in the way with which we are most familiar. In England, if a female be indiscreet, she may be subsequently made "an honest woman;" but in France, the sooner she was made an honest woman, the sooner commenced her privilege to be as indiscreet as she pleased. It is not therefore surprising, that directly Mademoiselle de Chamrond came of age, she should be married to the Marquis du Deffand, and, in the natural course of things, it was to be expected that almost directly she possessed the respectable position of a married woman, the young beauty should find her husband "a weak and tiresome companion;" and quit his roof to seek a more agreeable associate elsewhere.

A benevolent biographer has endeavoured to make out a case in favour of the lady*, but her only apology must be sought in the character of the age in which she flourished. We expect nothing but crabs from crab trees, and burs from thistles. Madame la Marquise du Deffand was the natural produce of the

* "Letters of the Marquise du Deffand to the Honourable Horace Walpole," Vol. i., p. 30.

soil, and was but one example of the very large crop it brought forth.

We neither think it profitable nor interesting to trace out all the successors of the Marquis. His wife of course made a figure at Court, and there was so fortunate (in the French sense) as to captivate its appointed head and ruler, the Regent Duc d'Orleans. The bad eminence she enjoyed in being reputed his mistress, was looked upon as so great a distinction in the depraved atmosphere she was forced to breathe, that nearly fifty years after his death, which took place in 1723, it was regarded as a title of consideration which no one would think of challenging. Even Walpole refers to it with a certain complacency. A beautiful woman, possessing such high honours in gallantry, was as might be expected, eminently fashionable. But she could boast of other claims to popularity, that long survived her personal attractions, great as they were. The nuns of La Madeleine if they had destroyed her faith, had unquestionably cultivated her intellect to the highest attainable point in a Frenchwoman's scale of intelligence. Religion she had none, but wit in abundance, and as the latter was "the one thing needful" in the *salons* of Paris at this period, her brilliant *repartées* did her more service in the opinion of her innumerable friends, than it was possible for her to have obtained with the assistance of all the piety of all the saints in the French Kalendar.

The hotel of the Marquise du Deffand became the

head-quarters not only of Parisian fashion, but of Parisian literature. Among the gay nobles of the Court, were sure to be seen the most celebrated men of letters.* The President Hénault contrived to obtain that place in her regard which the Regent had left vacant, and by all accounts he appears to have used his distinction in a manner far from satisfactory to its donor. With Voltaire she maintained a constant correspondence, and every writer of eminence might calculate with certainty upon her patronage and friendship.

Her amiability and cleverness were so well governed by each other, that she retained her popularity after she found herself obliged to abandon all pretensions to gallantry. In 1752, her eye-sight began to fail, and in two years after she was totally blind. To this terrible deprivation she appears to have submitted with the best grace. It did not disfigure her features; apparently it had as little prejudicial effect upon her powers of pleasing. She entertained her friends as hospitably as ever; her suppers lost none of their attractions; her *bon mots* none of their point. She was still philosophical, still a *bel esprit*. She was always gay, charming, clever—everything but a Christian.

* The Baron de Grimm and Walpole represent her as hating every one bearing the name of philosopher; but surely they mean something very like the reverse of this, for the most eminent philosophers were her most intimate friends. "Historical and Literary Memoirs and Anecdotes." Vol. iii., p. 91. "Walpole Letters." Vol. i., p. 376.

Her hatred of *les philosophes* dates only from their abandonment of her for Mademoiselle de l'Espinasse.

The affliction of blindness had thus been endured eleven years, before the commencement of her acquaintance with Horace Walpole. Englishmen, who could lay claim to any celebrity, were sure of a welcome at her hands. In this spirit she had honoured Hume and flattered Wilkes; but the son of the great Statesman, who was so well remembered in France, seemed to possess some stronger claim to her notice, and when the reputation that had preceded him had been increased by the exhibition of a species of merit, which in France is so certain of appreciation, Madame du Deffand's feelings in favour of her new acquaintance, rose to a degree of tender enthusiasm which it was impossible to parallel even among her countrywomen.

Walpole was an honoured guest at her suppers; but he did not at first reciprocate her regard. In his correspondence of the time, we find him speaking of the blind old lady, with anything rather than respect. It was not till some time afterwards that the kindliness of her disposition, her sincerity, and humility, began to force their way to his mind. Perhaps the stedfastness of her admiration for himself may have made him think better of her than otherwise would have been the case. It, however, did sometimes happen that this admiration was not agreeable to him. He possessed a keen sense of the ludicrous, and a lively apprehension of ridicule. The tender solicitude of a woman old enough to be his grandmother, made him appear ridiculous in his own eyes, and in the course of her prolonged correspondence, he was fre-

quently obliged to give Madame du Deffand an intimation that her transports were far from becoming.*

It was a difficult thing to keep her enthusiasm within rational bounds, and she could not help regarding her friend's prudence as very great cruelty; but she happily possessed a humble and self-sacrificing spirit, and as readily as she acknowledged her weaknesses, resigned herself to the punishment they brought upon her. Her friend subsequently did justice to her character. He says:—

"Her severity to herself was not occasional or affected modesty. She constantly thought and spoke unfavourably of her own amazing parts; and knowing no language but her own, and never having taken any studied pains (though she had read a vast deal) to improve herself, she imagined that she was more ignorant than many others. But the vivacity and strength of her mind, her prodigious quick-

* The Baron de Grimm, who ought to have been very well informed on the subject, records a curious illustration of Parisian friendship under the date of August, 1778. "Figure to yourself," he says, "Madame du Deffand, blind, seated in her dressing-room in an easy chair, which resembles the tub of Diogenes, with her old friend M. de Pont de Veyle, lolling in a *bergère* on the other side of the chimney." Such is the scene, such the actors, and the following is the substance of one of their recent conversations:—

"Pont de Veyle?" "Madam." "Where are you?" "On the other side of your chimney." "Lolling in your chair, with your feet upon the dogs, as we should do, with our friends?" "Yes, madam." "It must be owned that there are few friendships in the world of so old a date as ours." "Very true." "It has lasted fifty years." "Yes, more than fifty." "And in all that time no cloud has intervened—no shadow of a quarrel." "That is what I have always admired." "But, Pont de Veyle, has it not been because at bottom we were always *extremely indifferent* the one to the other?" "That may very possibly be the case, madam!"—"Historical and Literary Memoirs and Anecdotes." Vol. iv. p. 44.

ness, her conception—as just as it was clear—her natural power of reasoning, her wit, the simplicity of her eloquence, her scorn of whatever was false or affected, and her long acquaintance with, and knowledge of the world, her intercourse with the brightest geniuses of the age, and of that best age (at least such as remained), raised her to a level with them."

Her correspondence with Walpole commenced on the 19th of April, 1766, but two days after he left Paris to return to England, and was continued with wonderful regularity till 1780—only interrupted by some brief visit from himself, to be renewed with eagerness a few hours after he had left her presence. Her talent was certainly considerable, and in her letters to Walpole, to Voltaire, and to Mademoiselle de L'Espinasse,* there are indications of no ordinary powers of thought, with great facility and happiness of expression. On these letters an able critic has passed judgment in the following clear and admirable phrases.

"This lady seems to have united the lightness of the French character with the solidity of the English. She was easy and volatile, yet judicious and acute; sometimes profound and sometimes superficial. She had a wit playful, abundant, well-toned; an admirable conception of the ridiculous, and great skill in exposing it; a turn for satire, which she indulged, not always in the best-natured manner, yet with irresistible effect; powers of expression varied, appropriate, flowing from the source, and curious without research; a refined taste for letters, and a judgment both for men and books in a high degree enlightened and accurate. As her parts had been

* This lady held the post of "companion," in the establishment. Baron de Grimm insinuates that the old lady grew jealous of her, and sent her away with a pension of a thousand crowns. She afterwards held a similar post, though not so blameless a one, in the establishment of d'Alembert.

happily thrown together by nature, they were no less happy in the circumstances which attended their progress and development. They were refined, not by a course of solitary study, but by desultory reading, and chiefly by living intercourse with the brightest geniuses of her age. Thus trained, they acquired a pliability of movement which gave to all their exertions a bewitching air of freedom and negligence, and made even their faults seem only the exuberances or flowerings-off of a mind capable of higher excellences, but unambitious to attain them. There was nothing to alarm or overpower. On whatever topic she touched, trivial or severe, it was alike *en badinant*; but in the midst of this sportiveness her genius poured itself forth in a thousand delightful fancies, and scattered new graces and ornaments on every object within its sphere. In its wanderings from the trifles of the day to grave questions of morals or philosophy, it carelessly struck out, and as carelessly abandoned, the most profound truths; and while it aimed only to amuse, suddenly astonished and electrified by rapid traits of illumination, which opened the depths of physical subjects and roused the researches of more systematic reasoners. To these qualifications were added an independence in forming opinions and a boldness in avowing them, which wore at least the resemblance of honesty; a perfect knowledge of the world, and that facility of manners which, in the commerce of society, supplies the place of benevolence."*

Walpole appears to have been influenced by the example of his eloquent correspondent to indulge in a good deal of energetic phraseology when replying to her; but a few years later his opinions underwent a sensible change. He became alarmed when he thought of "the world's dread laugh" at the encouragement he had afforded to the display of octogenarian sentimentality; affected to believe that his imperfect knowledge of French might have led him to commit himself to much more than he had desired or intended;

* "Quarterly Review," for May 1811.

and was uneasy till he had persuaded Madame du Deffand to send him back his letters.*

The maiden name of her grand-daughter, as she playfully styled the Duchess de Choiseul, was Du Chatel. In his will, her husband, who was Prime Minister of France, desires to be buried in the same grave with her, expressing a vast regard for her good qualities—which does not agree with Walpole's assertion of his preference for the Duchesse de Grammont, who, by the way, if we may believe a description of her penned in 1761 was not a very loveable person, though far from being without good qualities.

"She never dissembles her contempt or dislike of any man, in

* The papers of Madame du Deffand, the greater portion of which subsequently came into the possession of her friend, were thus arranged: I. A large folio volume, bound in green vellum, "Œuvres de Mons. le Chevalier de Boufflers," in prose and verse. II. A folio volume bound in vellum, "Recueil de Lettres Choisies de Différentes Personnes." III. A folio volume bound in calf, and one in blue paper, "Lettres de Mons. de Voltaire à Madame du Deffand." IV. A small quarto volume in green vellum "Journal de Madame du Deffand." V. A small quarto volume, bound in red morocco, with a silver lock, "Recueil de Divers Ouvrages," par Madame du Deffand. VI. A large packet of MSS., "Mélanges de Différentes Pièces, &c. &c." VII. Another of the same materials, verse and prose. VIII. Another of the same kind. IX. Another of the same kind, containing letters from Hume, Voltaire, Madame de Stael, and President Lambert. X. A similar packet of poems, plays, and letters of her friends. XI. A packet of several hundred original letters, addressed to her by Voltaire, Rousseau, De Lisle, Montesquieu, Madame de Stael, Horace Walpole, the President Hénault, Baron Bernstorff, &c. &c. XII. Seven large packets containing eight hundred original letters addressed by her to Horace Walpole, from which Miss Berry's work was published. The whole of this collection, with five bundles of printed pamphlets and poems, &c., were sold at the Strawberry Hill sale to Mr. Dyce Sombre, for one hundred and fifty seven pounds ten shillings.

whatever degree of elevation. It is said she might have supplied the place of Madame de Pompadour, if she had pleased. She treats the ceremonies and pageants of Courts as things beneath her. She possesses a most uncommon share of understanding, and has very high notions of honour and reputation."

These were nobly demonstrated at a subsequent period, when being summoned before the Revolutionary Tribunal, she pleaded, with an eloquence that astonished those miscreants, not for her own life, but for that of her friend the Duchesse du Chatelet: she had afterwards the melancholy satisfaction of perishing on the same scaffold with her.*

The brother of the Duke married Mademoiselle Clermont d'Amboise, whose improper intimacy with Clairval, a popular actor of the Comédie Française, caused her husband, the Comte de Choiseul Stainville to confine her for the remainder of her days in the convent of Les Filles de Ste. Marie. Two daughters were ostensibly the fruit of this union, but more probably were the offspring of the intrigue—one, at least, who was very handsome, and married Prince Joseph of Monaco, bore a striking likeness to Clairval—her sister married her cousin the Duc de Choiseul. There was a drawing at Strawberry Hill in which Madame du Deffand and the Duchess de Choiseul, in the assumed characters of grandmother and grandaughter were represented in Madame du Deffand's sitting-room, the elder lady seated, the younger presenting her with a doll. The artist was an amateur, M. de Car-

* "Letters of the Marquise du Deffand to Horace Walpole." Vol. i. p. 13.

montel, reader to the Prince of Condé, and author of several dramatic pieces.*

On receiving the drawing of Madame du Deffand and the Duchesse de Choiseul, Horace Walpole writes to the former lady in these terms:—

"Me voici le plus content des hommes, je viens de recevoir le tableau. J'ai arraché toutes les envelopes dont il étoit barricadé et enfin je vous retrouve. Oui, vous, vous-même—je savois par inspiration que M. de Carmontel devoit vous peindre mieux que jamais Raphael n'a su prendre une ressemblance; cela se trouve exactement vrai au pied de la lettre. Vous êtes ici en personne, je vous parle, il n'y manque que votre impatience à repondre. La Tulippe, votre Tonneau, vos meubles, votre chambre, tout y est, et de la plus grande vérité. Jamais une idée ne s'est si bien rendue. Mais voilà tout! Pour la chére grand'maman, rien de plus manqué. Jamais, non jamais je ne l'aurois devinée. C'est une figure des plus communes. Rien de cette délicatesse mignonne de cet esprit personifié, de cette finesse sans méchanceté, et sans affectation. Rien de cette beauté qui paroit une émanation de l'âme, qui vient se placer sur le visage de peur que'n ne la craigne au lieu de l'aimer. Enfin, enfin, j'en suis bien mécontent."†

There have been many examples of a confidential correspondence between men of genius and women of rank: in France at this particular period it was quite a fashion. No lady could be exactly in the mode unless she held an epistolary flirtation with a poet—or cultivated a little mystic sentimentality with a philosopher. Such a fashion was open to abuse; but worse have been tolerated; and this at least can be said for it, that when women did thus condescend to trifle with their reputations with men remarkable for their

* This drawing was sold at the Strawberry Hill sale for seven guineas.

† "Letters of the Marquise du Deffand." Vol. i. p. 207,

intelligence, they were anxious to prove how resolved they were not to "stoop to folly."

One of the most celebrated of this gay coterie was the Comtesse de Boufflers. Her career had many features in common with that of her brilliant associates. She had married the Comte de Boufflers, and had then commenced the usual life of a Frenchwoman of fashion. Gifted with youth, beauty, and wit, she seemed formed to dazzle and to captivate and soon became one of the most brilliant of that brilliant circle which boasted of the beauty and intellect of France. She became the intimate friend of of the Duchesse d'Orleans; but friendship in France does not last for ever, and the young Countess shortly became still more intimate with the Prince de Conti. Her fascinations and accomplishments were greatly strengthened by a reputation she had acquired for literary talent; in consequence of having written a tragedy which, however, notwithstanding it obtained the suffrages of the critics, never had the honour of appearing in print. The reputation acquired by the tragedy was sure of surrounding her with the most eminent scholars, poets, and philosophers of her country, and she of course was held in the highest estimation by several of the most distinguished among them. Rousseau was a favourite with all the French Aspasias, and the Countess exceeded the enthusiasm of his most enthusiastic admirers. But the great object of their idolatry was an Englishman. Hume was at this period the cynosure of all the brilliant eyes in Paris, and with him, the beautiful Countess,

with her customary zeal, rushed into a friendship and a correspondence. Her husband died in 1764. She then aspired to become a princess, but it so happened that her friend the Prince de Conti was satisfied with his position and did not think a change in her's necessary. This disappointment requiring philosophy, it was natural that Hume should be in request. He wisely advised the lady gradually to break off her intimacy with the Prince, and begin an independent life in Paris.

"The inexpressible and delicate graces of your character and conversation," he tells her, "like the soft notes of a lute, are lost amid the tumult of company in which I commonly saw you engaged. A more select society would know [how] to set a juster value upon your merit. Men of sense and taste and letters would accustom themselves to frequent your house. Every elegant society would court your company. And though all great alterations in the habits of living may at first appear disagreeable, the mind is soon reconciled to its new situation, especially if more congenial and natural to it."*

Whilst the philosopher was employing his vigorous mind in affording the disappointed beauty consolation and advice, she was kindly exerting her interest, which was considerable, to advance his fortunes. She wrote to the Duke of Bedford, to recommend her friend for a vacancy occasioned by the promotion of Sir Charles Bunbury; and the surest proof of the value of her interposition was given in the readiness with which the Duke set himself to accomplish her wishes. In Hume's celebrated quarrel with Rousseau, she again interfered in his behalf,

* "Select Correspondence of David Hume." Page 118.

by writing a letter of the most energetic character to Jean Jacques. She also sent a communication to Hume, equally full of good sense, decision, and grace. Walpole's fictitious letter from the King of Prussia, which had sunk so deep into the sensitive mind of Rousseau, was properly commented upon by her, and she employed all her eloquence to prevent the quarrel from breaking out into greater violence. Philosophers, however, are belligerents the most difficult to reconcile. Each answered her sensible letter, exculpating himself, and abusing his late friend. The sudden flight of Rousseau from England terminated the discussion. Madame de Boufflers appears to great advantage in these letters. She never separated herself from the Prince de Conti, whom she survived.

The Countess de Boufflers visited England more than once. With our language she was familiar, and was well known to many English persons of distinction. Her last visit was made in the year 1789, at the commencement of the French Revolution, and she resided here for a considerable period with her daughter-in-law, the Countess Amelia de Boufflers, who was famous as a skilful performer on the harp, and is often mentioned by Walpole. The Prince de Conti possessed the dignity of Grand Prieur de l'Ordre de Malthe, and resided at the Temple, in Paris, whence originated the title Madame du Deffand applied to Madame Boufflers "l'Idole du Temple," by which she is so frequently designated in the Deffand Correspondence.

During her residence in this country she paid her memorable visit to Dr. Johnson, at his lodgings in the Temple in London; and after an interesting conversation with the great autocrat of letters, took her leave. The Countess had proceeded some way down stairs when the Doctor remembered that he ought to have attended such a visitor to the door: he rushed hastily after her, and, though his costume was careless and his manners awkward, he left the lively Frenchwoman no cause to complain of his want of gallantry. Perhaps it was the portly Doctor's first appearance in the character of a "Squire o' Dames:" but with a woman of sense, like the Countess, his sincerity made ample amends for his deficiencies as a fine gentleman.

The next of the group described in Walpole's Letter to Gray, is Madame la Maréchale de Mirepoix, sister of the Prince de Beauvau; her claims to celebrity consisted in having been the first lady of rank to countenance and associate with the too celebrated Madame du Barri, at Versailles. La Maréchale figures prominently in the pen-and-ink sketches of her friend Madame du Deffand, who at least was not disinclined to do justice to her attractions. There is extant a letter from David Hume to the Comtesse de Boufflers, containing some curious particulars respecting this lady. He avers that, on the death of one of his Majesty's favourites, Madame wrote to the King, proposing to supply the vacancy, and that the King, far from complying with the proposal, treated it with very little consideration. The

negotiation was a secret on the part of the lady, but his Majesty gave his reply into the hands of her nearest relative, Prince de Beauvau, saying, "Here's an answer to the Maréchale: pray deliver it to her." The Prince, not regarding the superscription, asked if it was for the Maréchale de Luxembourg? "No," said the King, pettishly, "it is for your sister."* She is thus described by Madame du Deffand:— "Sa figure est charmante, son teint est éblouissant, ses traits, sans être parfaits, sont si bien assortis, que personne n'a l'air plus jeune et n'est plus jolie."

The negotiation of Madame la Maréchale sounds strange to English ears: but in Paris, at that time, there were plenty of Madames of equal *respectability*, who would have been quite as eager to put forth their claims with a like promptitude for so coveted a post as mistress to the Sovereign.

There is another la Maréchale in this galaxy. She was Madame la Duchesse de Luxembourg, by a second marriage, her first having been to the Duc de Boufflers, by whom she had a son, who died at Genoa of the small pox. She was sister to the Duc de Villeroi. After her union with le Maréchal Duc de Luxembourg, she frequently entertained Rousseau at her mansion, Montmorency; for, like her fair contemporaries, philosophers were sûre to be in request when lovers were getting out of fashion. Jean Jacques speaks in the highest terms of the Marshal,

* "Private Correspondence of David Hume with several distinguished Persons." Page 80.

laments his loss as irreparable, and entered into a friendly correspondence with his wife.* Madame du Deffand has drawn her "character"—a style of portrait painting then much in vogue, both in France and England: and in very many instances showed extreme consideration on the part of the artist in supplying the individual with what he or she stood extremely in need. The thing became so common that everybody seemed to be writing everybody else's character, with, at the same time, a very singular oblivion of his own. The charity that begins at home might have been referred to in these instances with singular advantage to the writer. Instances might occur of a person requiring two "characters." A reference to Dean Swift in the first volume of this work affords a remarkable one.

The maiden name of Madame de Rochefort was Brancas. That she was mistress of the Duc de Nivernois, seems to have been her principal claim to consideration. She made herself prominent amongst the gay butterflies of both sexes, who were sporting over a volcano. We see nothing in the state of society of which they were considered ornaments, but the productiveness of a rank soil, which thrust forth heaps

* "Le moment où j'eus le bonheur de le connoître, ressembloit beaucoup à celui où je l'ai perdu; dans l'un et dans l'autre j'étois affligé, délaissé, malade. Il me consola de tout; qui me consolera de lui. Les amis que j'avois avant de le perdre; car mon cœur usé par les maux, et déjà durci par les ans, est fermé désormais à tout nouvel attachement." "Private Correspondence of David Hume" Page 100. See also "Lettres Originales de J. J. Rousseau."

of delicate fungi that look wholesome and inviting, but are in their nature the most subtle of poisons. The indelicacy and coarseness which so much struck Walpole on his first coming amongst them, were not more obvious than the frivolity and selfishness. They were, in short, but the scum rising to the top of the cauldron, which so many unholy fires had lighted, and which menaced the existence of the little that was good, in the sweeping destruction of the great that was evil.

Hume mentions having passed an evening in Madame de Rochfort's company. Indeed she was one of the fair sceptics by whom the English Philosopher was hailed as the Prophet of Infidelity: and it was at their toilets he enjoyed that confidential intimacy, which Horace Walpole observed with such astonishment. He seems to have thought his countryman's popularity with the sex altogether unaccountable: but, before he had been in the French capital a week, he was obliged to observe that which threw the favours accorded to the Scottish philosopher completely into the back ground.

There were several other ladies of less celebrity, who were in the habit of mixing in the select circle at Madame du Deffand's Sunday evening suppers, to do honour to her friend, Horace Walpole. There was Madame de Caraman, sister to the Prince de Chimay, and niece to Madame la Maréchale de Mirepoix; Madame la Comtesse de Valentinois, sister-in-law to the Prince of Monaco, who affected to detest the

English ;* Madame du Pin, known to the reader by Lord Chesterfield's references to her in his celebrated letters to his son : the Comtesse de Forcalquier, who had previously married the Comte de Toulouse, a natural son of Louis XIV., and whose maiden name was Canizy ; the Comtesse de Jonsac, niece to the President Hénault, and her sister-in-law, la Maréchale d'Aubeterre ; La Duchesse de la Valliére, daughter of the Duc d'Usez ; the Comtesse d'Egmont, daughter of the Maréchal Duc de Richelieu ; La Marquise de St. Maigrin, the wife of the Duc de la Vauguion's eldest son ; the Princesse d'Henin, daughter of Madame de Monconseil ; and the Princesse de Beauveau née, Rohan-Chabot, whose first marriage was with the Comte de Clermont d'Amboise. It is to this lady that Hume alludes, when he tells the Comtesse de Boufflers,—

"I found her as obliging and as friendly as if she had never conversed with Kings, and never were a politician. I really doubt much of her talent for politics. Pray, what is your opinion ? Is she qualified, otherwise than by having great sense and an agreeable conversation, to make progress in the road to favour ; and are not these qualities rather an incumbrance to her ?"†

We cannot close the list, which we are very far from having exhausted, without mentioning another Princess—perhaps of less celebrity than most of those we have just mentioned : nevertheless, as one of Walpole's Parisian friends, the following sketch from his own pen can scarcely fail of being read with interest :

* For a description of her character see "Marmontel's Memoirs." Vol. iii. p. 156.

† "Private Correspondence of David Hume." Page. 85.

"The Princesse de Talmond," he says, "though not an historic personage, made a figure in her time in the Court of Louis XV. She was born in Poland, and was related to his Queen, Marie Leczinska, with whom she came into France, where she married a Prince of the House of Bouillon, who left her a widow. To please the good Queen, she acted devotion in her latter days, as in her earlier she had been *galante* to please herself. Her last lover had been the young Pretender, whose picture she wore in a bracelet, on the opposite side of which was one of Jesus Christ. Somebody asked what relation there was between the two pictures, the Comtesse de Rochefort (afterwards Duchesse de Nivernois), replied, 'Because the same text suits both,—*Mon Royaume n'est pas de ce Monde.*' When I was at Paris, in the year 1765, and had written the letter in the name of the King of Prussia to Rousseau, which made so much noise, the Princesse de Talmond desired the Duchesse Dowager d'Aiguillon, with whom I was much acquainted, to bring me to her, adding, that though she hated the English (on the Pretender's account), she was so pleased with my letter, that she must see me. I did not like to be carried about as a sight (the Abbesse de Paulbemont and another Abbesse having already sent for me on the same account, Rousseau being *en mauvaise odeur* with the devout), but the Duchesse said the Princesse was a relative of the Queen, and I must go. Accordingly Madame d'Aiguillon took me from Madame de Rochefort's (who also lodged at the Luxembourg) up to to the Princesse, who had the state apartment. We found her in a vast chamber, hung with old red damask and some dark pictures of former Kings of France, lighted only by two tapers, which left it so obscure that advancing to her, who sat at one corner at the further end, on a small bed hung round with Polish saints, I stumbled over her dog, and cat, and footstool, and spitting pot, and when I came up to her, she could find nothing to say to me. At last, after a visit of twenty minutes, she desired me to get her a black and white greyhound, matched exactly like one she had lost, and which I had never seen. I promised and took my leave, and thought no more of her or her dog, and my promise. Three months after, as I was going to leave Paris, a Swiss servant belonging to me, brought into my dressing-room a wretched picture of a dog and cat. 'Why

surely,' said I, 'you can't be such a fool as to think I would buy such a daubing as that!' 'Acheter, pardy! ce n'est pas à acheter Monsieur, ça vient de la part de Mad. la Princesse de Talmond, et voici un billet avec.' I opened the note; it said, that hearing I was on my departure for England, she reminded me of my promise; and that I might remember the precise marks of her 'pauvre Diane,' and get her exactly such another, she had sent me its portrait, but that I must return the picture, which she would not part with for the world."

This sketch is rather coarse, but probably it is as little exaggerated as could be expected from Walpole. The society which it illustrates abounded with such coarsenesses. Princesses were not expected to exhibit much propriety—nor Duchesses to be overburthened with delicacy. In short, the highest circles in Paris had most of the attributes of the lowest life.

Among the buildings which interested Walpole in Paris, was a new Office for State Papers, which he describes to be "a large structure like a hospital, with the most admirable order and method. Lodgings for every officer: his name and business written over his door. In the body is a perspective of seven or eight large chambers; each is painted with emblems, and wainscotted with presses, with wired doors and crimson curtains. Over each press, in golden letters, the country to which the piece relates, as Angleterre, Allemagne, &c. Each room has a large funnel of bronze, with ormolu, like a column, to air the papers and preserve them. In short, it is as magnificent as useful."* In general, he is very far from complimenting the good city, which,

* "Walpole Letters." Vol. v. p. 82.

in another place, he alludes to as "a filthy stream, in which everything is washed without being cleaned;" adding that it is made up of "dirty houses, ugly streets, worse shops, and churches loaded with bad pictures."* The only place in the neighbourhood which satisfied his ideas, was Livry, and he speaks of the dwelling of Madame de Sevigné, with an enthusiasm natural in so great an admirer of her epistolary compositions. But even the charms of Livry were not sufficiently powerful to detain him from his beloved Strawberry, to which, in the height of his Parisian popularity, he had yearned to return; and early in May, 1766, he quitted the French capital and rejoined his old friends in London.

He had not long found his way to his old haunts before he began to suffer from the effects of the most famous of his Parisian jokes. The fictitious letter of the King of Prussia, much as it had been canvassed among the writer's French friends, had caused more observation in England — where the subsequent arrival of Rousseau, and his quarrel with Hume, had directed general attention towards it. There were not wanting persons to take the part of the French philosopher, and to condemn the trick that Walpole had played upon him. Among others, Warburton, who was himself in no degree a respecter of private feelings, in a letter to a brother divine, alluding to Rousseau, says, "Walpole's pleasantry upon him had baseness in its very conception. It was written when the poor man had determined to seek an asylum in

* "Walpole Letters." Vol. v., p. 140.

England; and is therefore justly and generously condemned by D'Alembert."

D'Alembert was at the head of a literary clique in Paris, and had been entrusted by Hume, after Rousseau had commenced his denunciations and charges against him, to publish his refutation, in which he had thought proper to express himself rather strongly against Walpole, for having been the original cause of the quarrel. It is not clear that the piece of pleasantry that had done so much mischief, had any particular "baseness" in it. There was much in Rousseau, not only quizzical but offensive; and therefore he had rendered himself amenable to such quizzing. Warburton was no friend to either, but he had contracted a prejudice against Walpole which he was at no pains to conceal. "I should be well pleased," he adds, "particularly to see so seraphic a madman attack so insufferable a coxcomb as Walpole; and, I think they are only fit for one another." Indeed, the worthy Divine, like Sir Lucius O'Trigger, thought it a mighty pretty quarrel as it stood, and notwithstanding his being a non-combatant himself, would readily have encouraged the parties to fight it out.

Hume applied to Walpole soon after the return of the latter to England, for information respecting the time in which the fictitious letter was first written, to assist him in his justification. This elicited from Walpole the following communication, which sufficiently marks the writer's feelings at the moment:—

HORACE WALPOLE TO DAVID HUME, ESQ.

"Dear Sir, Arlington Street, July 26, 1766.

"Your set of literary friends are what a set of literary men are apt to be, exceedingly absurd. They hold a consistory to consult how to argue with a madman; and they think it very necessary for your character to give them the pleasure of seeing Rousseau exposed, not because he has provoked you, but them. If Rousseau prints, you must; but I certainly would not till he does.

"I cannot be precise as to the time of my writing the King of Prussia's letter, but I do assure you, with the utmost truth, that it was several days before you left Paris, and before Rousseau's arrival there, of which I can give you a strong proof; for I not only suppressed the letter while you staid there, out of delicacy to you, but it was the reason why, out of delicacy to myself, I did not go to see him, as you often proposed to me, thinking it wrong to go and make a cordial visit to a man, with a letter in my pocket to laugh at him. You are at full liberty, dear Sir, to make use of what I say in your justification either to Rousseau or to anybody else. I should be very sorry to have you blamed on my account; I have a hearty contempt of Rousseau, and am perfectly indifferent what the literati of Paris think of the matter. If there is any fault, which I am far from thinking, let it lie on me. No parts can hinder my laughing at their possessor, if he is a mountebank. If he has a bad and most ungrateful heart, as Rousseau has shown in your case, into the bargain, he will have my scorn likewise, as he will of all good and sensible men. You may trust your sentence to such, who are as respectable judges as any that have pored over ten thousand more volumes.

"Yours most sincerely.

"P.S.—I will look out the letter and the dates as soon as I go to Strawberry Hill."

Walpole hoped the affair would proceed no further, and that the delirious folly of Rousseau would be left to the contempt it merited. With that impression, finding his health again giving way, he proceeded to the fashionable spa, Bath, to obtain the

benefit of its mineral waters. Scarcely had he returned to town, when he heard of the pamphlet published in Paris, under the auspices of D'Alembert which contained not only a mutilated version of the letter he had lately written to Hume, but some strictures from the editor upon him equally unexpected and unsatisfactory. Having read it, he wrote to Hume on November 6th, expressing his surprise and regret that the historian had suffered himself to be dragged into print in a controversy with Rousseau, and allowed his letter to form a feature in it. He then falls upon the editor to this effect :—

"Your friend D'Alembert, who, I suppose, has read a vast deal, is, it seems, offended with my letter to Rousseau. He is certainly as much at liberty to blame it as I was to write it. Unfortunately he does not convince me: nor can I think but that if Rousseau may attack all governments and all religions, I might attack him; especially in his affectation and affected misfortunes, which you and your editors have proved, are *affected*. D'Alembert might be offended at Rousseau's ascribing my letter to him; and he is in the right. I am a very indifferent author; and there is nothing so vexatious to an indifferent author as to be confounded with another of the same class. I should be sorry to have his éloges and translations of scraps of Tacitus laid to me. However, I can forgive him anything, provided he never translates me."*

The reply of Hume contained a sort of apology for the indiscretion of his friend, which elicited a long letter from Horace Walpole full of animadversions on philosophers in general, and on M. D'Alembert in particular. He had ascertained that the latter was at variance with Madame du Deffand, and being known as her especial friend, this had induced the

* "Walpole Letters." Vol. v. p. 169.

Frenchman to attack him. On this point Walpole dilates with great bitterness

"I thought he was a philosopher," he says, "and that philosophers were virtuous upright men, who loved wisdom, and were above the little passions and foibles of humanity. I thought they assumed that proud title as an earnest to the world that they intended to be something more than mortal; that they engaged themselves to be patterns of excellence, and would alter no opinion, would pronounce no decision, but what they believed the quintessence of truth; that they always acted without prejudice and respect of persons. Indeed, we know that the ancient philosophers were a ridiculous composition of arrogance, disputation, and contradictions; that some of them acted against all ideas of decency; that others affected to doubt of their own senses; that some, for venting unintelligible nonsense, pretended to think themselves superior to kings; that they gave themselves airs of accounting for all that we do, and do not see—and yet, that no two of them agreed in a single hypothesis; that one thought fire, another water, the origin of all things; and that some were even so absurd and impious as to displace God, and enthrone matter in his place. I do not mean to disparage such wise men, for we are really obliged to them; they anticipated and helped us off with an exceeding deal of nonsense, through which we might possibly have passed, if they had not prevented us. But when, in this enlightened age, as it is called, I saw the term *philosophers* revived, I concluded the jargon would be omitted, and that we should be blessed with only the cream of sapience; and one had more reason still to expect this from any superior genius. But alas! my dear Sir, what a tumble is here. Your D'Alembert is a mere mortal oracle. Who but would have laughed, if when the buffoon Aristophanes ridiculed Socrates, Plato had condemned the former, not for making sport with a great man in distress, but because Plato hated some blind old woman with whom Aristophanes was acquainted." *

Walpole was extremely annoyed at the remarks which were made both in France and England, on

* "Walpole Letters." Vol. v., p. 171.

what he chose to consider a justifiable jest on the most mischievous of those philosophic empirics, whom he held in such contempt: as is generally found to be the the case with jesters at the expense of others, he was very much averse to any joke at his own; and as it also is as common with self-humiliating people, he was angry if any one but himself attempted to depreciate him. The remarks of D'Alembert, as we have just shown, were very ill-received. Walpole regarded them as an affront, and replied by a retort anything but courteous. Among others in Paris, Freron, the editor of one of its periodicals, attacked Walpole by a severe criticism on his letter to Hume, and he had no lack of imitators in England: but these assailants appear to have been too obscure to excite his observation, and in a short time other subjects attracted the public attention:—Rousseau's vagaries, Hume's indignation, and Walpole's studied sarcasm ceased to obtrude themselves upon the public notice.

In one of Cole's letters to Walpole, we find the following passage respecting Rousseau:—

"Since Mr. Rousseau's happy arrival in England, we have had in every paper two or three articles on his account; we seem to think we have a mighty acquisition in what his own country has justly rejected; if the Emperor had paid us a visit, the nation could not be more stunned with his arrival; in short, there is nothing now in our papers but some article about Mr. Rousseau, the Prince and Princess of Brunswick, and their new-born son who came into the world last Friday."*

Cole took a good deal of interest in the Rousseau and Hume controversy, and in an unpublished letter

* MS.

of May 11, 1776, thus expresses himself on the subject :—

"To say how much obliged [I am] to you for the communication of your short letter to Rousseau is beyond the limits of this letter. Perhaps the conciseness of such an epistle may be esteemed one of its great merits, yet I am so singular as to wish it had been as many pages as there are letters; the sneer is so cutting that the gentleman is very visibly hurt by it, as appears by a short letter of his dated from Wootton, April 7, published in the public prints. 'A sad and miserable translation into English of your spirited letter was published in the 'Cambridge Chronicle' of April 5. The letter from Wootton was also in the same paper, possibly both taken from London papers. I assure you, upon my faith and honour, that your letter was never out of my own hands, nor did I ever give a copy of it to any soul alive or dead. This I mention for fear you should be tempted to think, as it appeared in the county paper, that I might by some means or other be accessory to its publication. I saw in the last Magazine a very ingenious extract of a letter from Voltaire to Rousseau upon the same plan of ridiculing his affectations; when I first read it, I was apt to suspect that Voltaire was not the real name."

Hume was employed at the French embassy in the capacity of Secretary to the Ambassador, the Marquis of Hertford,* which first brought him in contact

* In one of his letters dated a little before the termination of Lord Hertford's embassy, Hume says "one day last Spring, Lord Hertford came into my room, and told me that he had heard of many people who endeavoured by their caresses to persuade me that I ought to remain in France; but he hoped that I would embrace no scheme of life which would ever separate him and me. He now loved me as much as ever he esteemed me, and wished we might pass our lives together. He had resolved several times to have opened his breast so far to me; but being a man of few words and no professions, he had still delayed it, and he now felt himself much relieved by this declaration of his desires and intentions."—Burton. "Life and Correspondence of David Hume."

with Walpole, the ambassador's cousin. He also stood high in the estimation of George III., and it is scarcely possible to say who esteemed him most, Lord Hertford or his brother, General Conway. His return to England with his unmanageable *protegé*, we have already mentioned, but we have not alluded to the sanguine expectations he entertained through the influence of such powerful friends, of a much higher post than he had possessed. Lord Hertford was about to proceed to Ireland as Lord-Lieutenant, and the philosopher fancied his diplomatic pretensions were sufficient to secure him the post of Irish Secretary; but there were obstacles in the way of his obtaining such an appointment which his friends could not surmount. Scotchmen were not in favour in Dublin, and Scotch philosophers so extremely unpopular that Hume was obliged to withdraw his claims.

The Irish Secretaryship was abandoned, but the King granting him a pension of 400*l.* a-year, and General Conway, the Secretary of State, appointing him his Under-Secretary, he had no reason to complain. His position, however, proved too agreeable to last. In little more than a year, General Conway resigned, and Hume returned once more to Edinburgh, where with ample means he enjoyed his leisure and the respect of his contemporaries, till his dissolution. No doubt he found the good ladies of "Auld Reekie" a very different set to the reckless, flattering, charming creatures who had paid such prodigious court to him at Paris; but possibly the philosopher had had enough of French *belles esprits*,

and was quite willing to do justice to the less showy but more sterling worth of his own countrywomen.

Hume's history as well as his philosophy has fallen somewhat into disrepute of late years, nevertheless there is no denying that he was a shrewd thinker and might have been an able historian had he taken a little more trouble in collecting his materials.*

It was in the summer of 1768 that Walpole received a communication from the most celebrated of the many celebrated men of whom France could then boast. The singular character of the "Historic Doubts" had attracted the attention of Voltaire, and he addressed a letter to the author, requesting a sight of it in such flattering terms, that the author's heart immediately opened towards the philosopher, as though under the influence of equal gratitude and admiration. He says in reply:—

"It is true, Sir, I have ventured to contest the history of Richard III, as it has been delivered down to us; and I must obey your commands, and send it to you, though with fear and trembling; for though I have given it to the *world* as it is called; yet, as you have justly observed, that world is comprised within a very small circle of readers—and undoubtedly I could not expect that you would do me the honour of being one of the number. Nor do I fear you, Sir, only as the first genius in Europe, who has illustrated every science; I have a more intimate dependence on you than you suspect. Without knowing it, you have been my master, and per-

* Walpole's opinion of Hume was not very exalted. In after years he styles him "a superficial mountebank," and severely condemns the deficiencies of his "History of England."—"Walpole's Letters." Vol. vi. p. 204.

haps the sole merit that may be found in my writings, is owing to my having studied yours: so far, Sir, am I from living in that state of barbarism and ignorance with which you tax me, when you say 'que vous m'êtes peut-être inconnu.' I was not a stranger to your reputation very many years ago, but remember to have then thought you honored our house by dining with my mother—though I was at school, and had not the happiness of seeing you; and yet my father was in a situation that might have dazzled eyes older than mine. The plain name of that father, and the pride of having had so excellent a father, to whose virtues truth, at last, does justice; is all I have to boast. I am a very private man, distinguished by neither dignities nor titles, which I have never done anything to deserve; but as I am certain that titles alone would not have procured me the honour of your notice, I am content without them."

He then proceeds to inform his correspondent that, in the preface of his "Castle of Otranto," he had ventured to find fault with his criticisms on Shakspeare. He does not apologize for the freedom he had taken; he merely acquaints Voltaire with the fact, leaving him to excuse it or not, as he thought proper. The philosopher was charmed with such an example of honesty, and having sufficiently expressed his opinion of the author and of Shakspeare, expresses one on the work that had elicited his letter, to the following effect:

"Avant le départ de ma lettre, j'ai le tems, Monsieur, de lire votre Richard III. Vous seriez un excellent attornei-général; vous pesez toutes les probabilités; mais il me paroit que vous avez une inclination secrette pour ce bossu. Vous voulez qu'il ait été beau garçon, et même galant homme. Le Bénédictin Calmet a fait une dissertation pour prouver que Jésus-Christ avait un fort beau visage. Je veux croire avec vous, que Richard III, n'était ni si laid, ni si méchant, qu'on le dit; mais je n'aurais pas voulu avoir affaire à lui. Votre rose blanche et votre rose rouge avaient de terribles épines pour la nation.

"Those gracious Kings are all a pack of rogues. En lisant l'histoire des York et des Lancastre, et de bien d'autres, on croit lire l'histoire des voleurs de grand chemin. Pour votre Henri VII, il n'était que coupeur de bourses. Be a minister or an anti-minister, a lord or a philosopher, I will be, with an equal respect, Sir, &c., &c."

Walpole is more charmed, and consequently becomes more complimentary. In commencing his reply, he says:—

"One can never Sir, be sorry to have been in the wrong,* when ones errors are pointed out to one in so obliging and masterly a manner. Whatever opinion I may have of Shakspeare, I should think him to blame, if he could have seen the letter you have done me the honour to write to me, and yet not conform to the rules you have there laid down. When he lived there had not been a Voltaire, both to give laws to the stage, and to show on what good sense those laws were founded. Your art, Sir, goes still further, for you have supported your arguments without having recourse to the best authority, your own works. It was my interest perhaps to defend barbarism and irregularity. A great genius is in the right, on the contrary, to show that when correctness, nay, when perfection is demanded, he can still shine, and be himself, whatever fetters are imposed upon him. But I will say no more on this head; for I am neither so unpolished as to tell you to your face how much I admire you; nor though I have taken the liberty to vindicate Shakspeare against your criticisms, am I vain enough to think myself an adversary worthy of you. I am much more proud of receiving laws from you, than of contesting them. It was bold in me to dispute with you even before I had the honour of your acquaintance; it would be ungrateful now, when you have not only taken notice of me, but forgiven me. The admirable letter you have been so good as to send me, is a proof that you are one of those truly

* Voltaire had said "Vous pardonnerez encore plus à mon ignorance de vos titres; je n'en respecte pas moins votre personne, je connais plus votre mérite que les dignités dont il doit être revêtu."

great and rare men who know at once how to conquer and to pardon."*

The Lord of Strawberry Hill could no more resist a little commendation of his writings from a great man, than he could patiently endure a little unceremonious criticism from a small one. He readily swallowed all his former impressions of Voltaire, when he found him praising his "Historic Doubts," but when certain members of the Society of Antiquaries ventured to hint a difference of opinion respecting some statements in that work, he declared war against the entire body.

In a short visit to Paris in the Autumn of 1769, Walpole thus describes Madame du Deffand:

"She makes songs, sings them, remembers all that ever were made; and having lived from the most agreeable to the most reasoning age, has all that was amiable in the last, all that is sensible in this, without the vanity of the former or the pedant impertinence of the latter. I have heard her dispute with all sorts of people on all sorts of subjects, and never knew her in the wrong. She humbles the learned, sets right their disciples, and finds conversation for everybody. Affectionate as Madame de Sevigné, she has none of her prejudices, but a more universal taste; and with the most delicate frame, her spirits hurry her through a life of fatigue that would kill me if I was to continue here. If we return by one in the morning from suppers in the country, she proposes driving to the Boulevard or the Foire St. Ovide, because it is too early to go to bed. I had great difficulty last night to persuade her, though she was not well, not to sit up till between two and three for the comet, for which purpose she had appointed an astronomer to bring his telescope to the President Hénault's, as she thought it would amuse me. In short her goodness to me is so excessive that I feel

* "Walpole Letters." Vol. v. p. 251.

ashamed at producing my withered person in a round of diversions which I have quitted at home."*

Madame du Deffand determined on enchanting Walpole, and if entire devotion to an object could have effected this, Madame would have succeeded. It was a peculiar feature in the character of French-women of that day,—that the older they grew, the less selfishness mingled with their attachments. Madame du Deffand fought a stout battle with time, in favour of her English friend, and gained it. Walpole, at the very least, entertained a sincere regard for her.

One of the chief objects of attraction in the French capital, when Horace Walpole visited it in September 1769, was Madame du Barri, the reigning Sultana at the Court of Louis XV at this period. She had risen from the lowest position in society, (where, however, the charms of her person were so appreciated, as to obtain for her the title of "Mademoiselle l'Ange,") to the grade of mistress to a profligate, known as Du Barri le Roué, and through his intervention to that of mistress of the King in his old age.† Nor did his services end here, for when the monarch was so thoroughly captivated as to desire her public reception at Court, he prevailed on his younger brother, the Comte Guillaume du Barri, to stoop to the infamy of a marriage with her: that sacred ceremony being indispensable to a woman ambitious of receiving the highest honours in vice. The exalted beauty was of course extremely "the fashion" in Paris, and among

* "Walpole Letters." Vol. v. p. 251.

† Louis XV. was then in his sixtieth year.

the crowds who hurried to gaze at her at Versailles was the English friend of Madame du Deffand. He says :—

"Our first object was to see Madame du Barri. Being too early for mass, we saw the Dauphin and his brothers at dinner. The eldest is the picture of the Duke of Grafton, except that he is more fair and will be taller. He has a sickly air and no grace. The Comte de Provence has a very pleasing countenance, with an air of more sense than the Comte d'Artois, the genius of the family. They already tell as many *bon mots* of the latter as of Henri Quatre and Louis Quatorze. He is very fat, and the most like his grandfather of all the children. You may imagine this royal mass did not occupy us long; thence to the chapel where a first row in the balconies was kept for us. Madame du Barri arrived over against us below, without rouge, without powder, and indeed *sans avoir fait sa toilette;* an odd appearance, as she was so conspicuous, close to the altar, and amidst both Court and people. She is pretty when you consider her; yet so little striking that I never should have asked who she was. There is nothing bold, assuming, or affected in her manner. Her husband's sister was along with her."

Walpole appears in his recollections to bear a resemblance to Justice Shallow, as far as regards a knowledge of the "buona robas"—though the fair acquaintances of the Minister's son were of a somewhat higher rank than those of the Temple Student. His curiosity usually was for courtezans "of high degree," yet on some occasions he is to be found extending it to those of a humbler kind. The apartments of Strawberry Hill were adorned with a series of portraits that might be regarded as a sort of illustration of "Paradise Lost;"—a gallery of fallen angels, who like those the most courtly of poets has immortalized, abandoned their Eden of truth and innocence for the society of sinful men :—and men, be it remembered, always possessing claims

to station and wealth sufficient to tempt their ambition, and minister to their vanity.

At this time Paris could boast of no star greater than Madame du Barri in her vocation,* and having beheld her at her devotions, Walpole seems to have entertained the idea of contrasting her with the most eminent of the "buona robas" of the preceding reign, in her favourite place of worship. In the same month of September, he obtained admission into St. Cyr,—that famous establishment which boasts of the least disreputable of Louis the Fourteenth's mistresses, for its foundress.

"The first thing I desired to see," he writes to his friend Montague, "was Madame de Maintenon's apartment. It consists of two small rooms, a library and a very small chamber, the same in which the Czar saw her, and in which she died. The bed is taken away, and the room covered now with bad pictures of the Royal Family, which destroys the gravity and simplicity. It is wainscotted with oak, with plain chairs of the same, covered with dark blue damask. Everywhere else the chairs are of blue cloth. The simplicity and extreme neatness of the whole house, which is vast, are very remarkable. A large apartment above (for that I have mentioned is on the ground floor) consisting of five rooms, and destined by Louis XIV. for Madame de Maintenon, is now the infirmary, with neat white linen beds, and decorated with every text of scripture by which it could be insinuated that the foundress was a Queen."

This institution is a notable example of French piety under the *ancien régime*—it is an exemplification

* Madame was well taken care of by her royal patron during his life, and at his death, at sixty-four, of the small-pox, he is said to have consigned to her use, into the hands of the Duc d'Aiguillon, the sum of three millions of livres; about one hundred and twenty thousand pounds, which however, very soon after the old King's demise, found its way to his successor.—Wraxall. "Historical Memoirs." Vol. i. p. 108.

also of an old adage, "the greater the sinner. the greater the saint." The widow of Scarron is transformed into a sort of Abbess—a Magdalen becomes the head of a model establishmeut for the cultivation of the feminine virtues. Walpole inspected this sisterhood, we believe, with more curiosity than reverence. He says, on entering their chapel :—

"The pensioners, two and two, each band headed by a nun, marched orderly to their seats, and sing the whole service, which I confess, was not a little tedious. The young ladies, to the number of two hundred and fifty are dressed in black, with short aprons of the same, the latter and their stays bound with blue, yellow, green or red, to distinguish the classes; the captains and lieutenants have knots of a different colour for distinction. Their hair is curled and powdered, their coiffure a sort of French round-eared caps, with white tippets, a sort of ruff and large tucker; in short, a very pretty dress. The nuns are entirely in black, with crape veils and long trains, deep white handkerchiefs and forehead cloths, and a very long train."

This semi-military semi-religious female academy possessed other features characteristic of the equivocal personage whose last hobby it had been :

"We were then carried into the public room of each class," continues Walpole. "In the first the young ladies, who were playing at chess, were ordered to sing to us the chorusses of Athaliah; in another they danced minuets and country dances, while a nun, not quite so able as St. Cecilia, played on a violin. In the others they acted before us the proverbs or conversations written by Madame de Maintenon for their instruction; for she was not only their foundress, but their saint, and their adoration of her memory has quite eclipsed the Virgin Mary." *

In returning from his visit to France in the autumn of 1769, Walpole suffered severely by the

* "Walpole Letters." Vol. v. p. 257.

inclemency of the weather, during what he describes as "a dreadful passage of eight hours." He complains of having been drowned though not shipwrecked: he was wetted to the skin by the rain, had his lap full of waves, was washed from head to foot in the boat at ten o'clock at night, and then stepped into the sea up to his knees. But the element from which sprung the Goddess of Beauty was not likely to disgust a Horace Walpole by a little rough usage. With the remembrance fresh in his mind of the entertainment he had received at the hands of so many of her votaries, he could bear a good deal of drowning. What were laps full of waves against a single reminiscence of the charming de Boufflers, of the exquisite de Choiseul, of the incomparable de Mirepoix, or of the inestimable Du Deffand? The Channel might have shown every indication of the most boisterous of channel tempests, yet would not have kept the gallant Lord of Strawberry from paying his grateful devoirs to the fair divinities who had tried to make Paris so agreeable to him.

In the summer of 1771 Walpole was again in Paris, where he found affairs in a worse state than ever. Writing on July 30th, he says:—

"The distress here is incredible, especially at Court. The King's tradesmen are ruined, his servants starving; and even angels and archangels cannot get their pensions and salaries, but sing 'Woe, woe, woe,' instead of 'Hosannahs.' Compiegne is abandoned; Villiers-cotêrets and Chantilly crowded, and Chanteloup still more in fashion, whither everybody goes that pleases; though, when they ask leave, the answer is 'Je ne le defends ni le permets.'

This is the first time that ever the will of a King of France was interpreted against his inclination. Yet, after annihilating his Parliament, and ruining public credit, he tamely submits to be affronted by his own servants. Madame de Beauveau, and two or three high-spirited dames, defy this Czar of Gaul. Yet they and their cabal are as inconsistent on the other hand. They make epigrams, sing vaudevilles against the mistress, hand about libels against the Chancellor, and have no more effect than a sky-rocket; but in three months will die to go to court, and to be invited to sup with Madame du Barri. The only real struggle is between the Chancellor and the Duc d'Aiguillon. The first is false, bold, determined, and not subject to little qualms. The other is less known, communicates himself to nobody, is suspected of deep policy and deep designs, but seems to intend to set out under a mask of very smooth varnish; for he has just obtained the payment of all his bitter enemy La 'Chalotais' pensions and arrears. He has the advantage, too, of being but moderately detested in comparison of his rival, and what he values more, the interest of the mistress. The Comptroller-General serves both, by acting mischief more sensibly felt: for he ruins every body but those who purchase a respite from his mistress.* He dispenses bankruptcy by retail, and will fall, because he cannot, even by these means, be useful enough. They are striking off nine millions from *la caisse militaire*, five from the marine, and one from the affaires étrangères; yet all this will not extricate them. You never saw a great nation in so disgraceful a position. Their next prospect is not better; it rests on an *imbecille*, both in mind and body."†

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* The Abbé Terrai held the appointment of Comptroller-General of the Finances; and he possessed a mistress known throughout Paris by the name of "La Sultane," who received bribes, with his connivance, for the exercise of his influence.

† "Walpole Letters." Vol. v., p. 305. During his visit to Paris, Walpole purchased from the Crozat collection the complete suit of armour of Francis I., estimated at a thousand crowns, but procured for him by Madame de Deffand for fifty louis.

In this kind of blind-man's buff the rulers of a great country fooled away precious time that should have been employed in ameliorating the condition of an oppressed people, or in attempting to guard against the moral earthquake which in a few years was to hurl them and their machinery into irretrievable ruin. But so insensible were they to the volcanic character of the ground on which they sported so heedlessly, that in the year 1770, at a Court ball, on the marriage of the Dauphin, there was every prospect of a revolution at Court on a question merely of precedence in dancing a minuet. The great ladies who officiated at these entertainments were determined not to allow Mademoiselle de Lorraine, daughter to the Comtesse de Brienne, and sister to the Prince de Lambesc, to dance immediately after the Prince and Princesses of the blood, and it required the personal interference of the King to enforce respect to his mandate.*

It is scarcely possible to convey to the reader a sufficient idea of the frivolity and licentiousness of French society at this period. It was divided into two classes,—the Court and the People,—between which seemed an impassable gulf. They are not to be considered as the rich and the poor—the two great divisions into which a community suffering under the influence of luxury and ignorance are commonly resolved—for many of the former had no pretensions

* Baron de Grimm. "Historical and Literary Memoirs and Anecdotes." Vol. iii., p. 28.

to wealth—but rather as the Patricians and Plebeians of classical Rome—or what might more characteristically be styled the Genteel and Vulgar of our every-day life in England. The one class would know nothing of the other—unless as Helots, upon whom they might trample with impunity:—the mob in the palace had no sympathy, no consideration for the mob in the market-place—indeed, the latter were considered a race apart, to be regarded only with contumely and insult—the tradesman as a slave, and the labourer as a beast.

Walpole noticed this unnatural state of things with many misgivings, which he lived to see realized. We have given some idea of the sort of ingredients that composed one portion of French society in the age of Louis XV.—nor is it to be wondered at, if under the influence of the most contemptuous neglect and the most grinding despotism, those of the other should be equally despicable:—possibly there was as little of anything really good in the dregs at the bottom as in the scum at the top; indeed, the result proved this; but the evident fermentation of this unwholesome mass of irreligion, profligacy, want, misery, and ignorance, could not fail to strike a stranger so observant as Walpole, and the flatteries he received failed to blind him to the evils on which his obliging friends appeared determined on shutting their eyes.

Walpole was again in Paris, in the month of August, 1775. He had been much pressed a short

time previously, to meet his cousin Conway and the Countess of Aylesbury there, but he was suffering severely from gout; and, entertaining a great repugnance to being nursed by foreigners, he excused himself from being of their party. His anxiety respecting his innamorata at last induced him to risk the voyage. Scarcely had he arrived safe in the French capital, when his ancient friend was at his side, and there insisted on remaining, whilst he changed his dress; maintaining that as she was quite blind there could be no impropriety in her being near him. Though in her seventy-eighth year, she was in perfect health, and full of vivacity, and Walpole had once more to go through the same course of suppers at her house which he had had to endure at his previous visit, and from which he never got to bed before two or three o'clock in the morning. This gaiety, however, seemed to do him good. He declares it enabled him to throw off fifteen years of his life. The state of the country was becoming more alarming, but the feverish restlessness of Madame du Deffand allowed him no time for observation, excepting in the way of her own entertainments, or the friends she was desirous he should meet; and on the 12th of October he left Paris.

In the Autumn of the year 1780, he suffered a further diminution of the small circle of old friends with whom and for whom, within the last five years he may be said only to have existed. And this was the oldest, and to all appearance the kindest of all

the circle. Madame du Deffand who had constantly corresponded with him in a style that showed it was the greatest gratification left to her, wrote to him on the 22nd of August, expressing her apprehensions of her approaching dissolution. She was now nearly eighty-four, and the infirmities natural to so advanced a period of human life were rapidly accumulating upon her. On the 8th of September, Walpole wrote the deep anxiety he felt, and was urgent to know her exact state, but his affectionate old friend was confined to her bed without the power of speech—to her a terrible deprivation.

As was usual in France, the friends who had thronged round her supper tables, thronged with equal eagerness round her bedside, or crowded her ante-rooms. Scandal and *bon mots*—card playing and gossip were as liberally circulated as ever. She was sinking rapidly, but her mind was always stronger than her body, and still maintained its superiority. A lethargy at last seized her and she sank without a struggle on the 24th of the same month. Her funeral obsequies were, at her own request, conducted in the most unassuming manner, and her remains were consigned to her parish church, St. Sulpice.

The Baron de Grimm, who knew Madame du Deffand intimately, does not draw quite so charming a portrait of the old lady, though he acknowledges that she was beyond dispute, for her wit and talents, one of the most celebrated women of the age; and

had been for a long time no less so for her beauty. He condemns her for exercising her wit at the expense of her friends; and states that Mademoiselle de l'Espinasse, her companion, on hastily withdrawing from her house, carried away with her a considerable portion of its attractions, in the shape of many of the most eminent of its *literati* This is no doubt an exaggeration. He adds—

"Her best friends, Madame de Luxembourg, Madame de Choiseul, and Madame de Cambise, scarcely ever quitted her during her last illness: in the excess of their attachment they never ceased playing at *loto* every evening in her chamber till she had breathed her last sigh. She never would hear either of confession or of receiving the Sacrament. All that the minister of the parish, who visited her in virtue of his office, could obtain, after the most earnest exhortations, was, that she would confess herself to her friend the Duc de Choiseul. 'It cannot be doubted,' concludes the Baron, in the sarcastic tone he so much condemns, 'that a confessor so judiciously chosen, granted her, with the best grace possible, absolution for all her sins, without excepting even an epigram she once made upon himself.'"

Walpole considered that by the demise of his affectionate correspondent, he must reckon himself dead in France: for he had no feelings in common with any one elsein that country:—the Philosophers—the Beauties—the Wits—had long in his estimation become "flat, stale, and unprofitable." Notwithstanding the fine compliments he had so recently exchanged with Voltaire, the latter had written to the Duchesse de Choiseul that the Englishman had declared war against him in defence, "de ce bouffon de Shakspeare," which coming to the know-

ledge of Walpole, shocked at such insincerity, he had dropped all communication with him. Rousseau had disgusted him with his ingratitude; and for D'Alembert and his scientific associates he entertained the most sovereign contempt. As for the ladies, he had had time to form an opinion upon their infidelities, moral and religious: and had grown so much out of taste with *bon mots* that he could no longer appreciate the peculiar *esprit* of the Parisian wits. The fact was, his mind was full of forebodings. He knew the true state of things in France, and could not but entertain a contemptible opinion of the delirious folly of that class, who obstinately shut their ears and their eyes to the dangers by which they were surrounded, while they continued their idle pleasures or more idle cabals.

CHAPTER VII.

CHATTERTON, MACPHERSON, AND WALPOLE.

THE attention given by many learned men during the latter half of the last century, to the study of English antiquities, particularly to the antiquities of English literature, led, in more than one instance, to open or concealed imitation. It has been well said, that there is nothing so new as that which is forgotten; and the novelty of lyrical fragments that had been unheard of for several centuries, was so refreshing to the literary public, that every one surrendered himself unhesitatingly to its enjoyment. The more barbarous the orthography, the more obscure the ideas, and the more puerile the subject, the better pleased appeared to be the readers.

Sometimes the rescued fragments assumed a sublimity too elevated for ordinary intellects—more frequently they affected a simplicity only to be appreciated by the plainest understanding. The wild and mystic—the fabulous and romantic—and the common-place and childish, had everywhere their coteries of admirers. Old poetry became more sought after than old wine; and a Georgian Homer would

have been elbowed out of the way with the slightest possible ceremony, had the discriminating crowd been in pursuit of a Plantagenet Rowley.

This rage for antiquated rhymes had spread through the length and breadth of the land. It had found a favorable soil for its culture in the old city of Bristol, where there are preserved so many vestiges of remote times, that an inclination for whatever could in any way illustrate their glories, seemed the most natural thing on earth. Very few persons had any real knowledge of archæology—but numbers owned to a taste for it. All at once it began to be rumoured amongst the more erudite Bristolians, that a literary discovery of vast importance had been made in their time-honoured city. A chest of extremely curious manuscripts had been found in one of the old churches. The sages hurried to the residence of the much-to-be-envied discoverer, and soon learned something of him as well as of his treasures. He proved to be a boy named Thomas Chatterton, who had only left Colston's school in July, 1767, when he had been apprenticed to Mr. John Lambert, an attorney. It was ascertained that he had shown some poetical talent, as well as a remarkable taste for literature. An article he had sent to a Bristol newspaper, in October, 1768, had been traced to him, which assumed to be a transcript from an ancient manuscript, entitled "A Description of the Fryars first passing over the Old Bridge." He was questioned by several eager scholars as to whence it came, and, after some contradictions and equivocations, he avowed that he had

received the original from his father, a sexton, by whom it had been found, with numerous other curious manuscripts, in various old chests in Redcliff Church —particularly in one called "Canynge's cofre," which belonged to the muniment room.

His wondering auditors looked on some musty old parchments, written in a strange hand, in an uncouth orthography, and went away satisfied that their good city had put forth claims to distinction which would raise her name to an equality with the most learned of Europe. Prominent among these sages were a Mr. Catcott, an amateur antiquary and pewterer, and Mr. Barrett, a surgeon, who was aspiring to the distinction of a man of letters, and was engaged upon a "History of Bristol." They obtained from the boy a good many of the old manuscripts, and took care that the treasures they possessed should be made known to the world.

The following account of "the Discovery" is given by the Rev. John Chapman, Vicar of Weston, near Bath, in a letter to Dr. Ducarel, dated December 15, 1771 :—

"There had been, time out of mind, a large chest in the tower of Redcliffe Church, full of old papers, some of which had occasionally been taken out to wipe candlesticks with or for other vile purposes. A few years ago one Chatterton, the sexton's son, who had received a tolerable education in Colston's charity-school, and was besides, a lad of good parts, had the curiosity to examine these papers more attentively. He was pleased with them, and carried the remains of them, and sold them to one Barrett, a surgeon, and one Catcott, a pewterer, in Bristol, in whose possession they are at present. They consist of an entire tragedy, some elegies and bal-

lads, and some prose pieces. We learn from them that the author's name was Thomas Rowley, chaplain to a Mr. Cannings, a very rich merchant in Bristol, about 1460, who built Redcliffe Church. I was all day yesterday with Mr. Catcott, who read the tragedy to me, and the other poetical pieces, with which I was charmed, particularly with a ballad occasioned by the death of Sir Charles Baldwyn, who was beheaded at Bristol, by order of Edward IV. It abounds, as indeed all his works do, with poetical images, and very noble sentiments. I was delighted with it. The tragedy is an admirable work; some parts of it, particularly a song on the supposed death of Ellie, are extremely beautiful. I begged with most earnest importunity for a copy of this song, which I dare say was a favourite song in Shakspeare's time, for he puts the burthen of it into the mouth of Ophelia, in the play of 'Hamlet.' But, earnest as I was, I could not prevail on Mr. Catcott to let me copy it. All I could get from him was the extract which I have inclosed, It is taken from the tragedy of 'Ellie.' Bertha, his lady, is distressed by his absence, and calls for music to soothe her melancholy. The minstrels describe in their songs the four seasons. The first and third, Spring and Autumn, are all the specimens I could procure. However, I hope I shall be able, in another visit, to get something more. The tragedy is in the sole possession of Mr. Catcott; the other pieces are betwixt them; but I believe the originals are all with Mr. Barrett. This gentleman, who is said to be a man of learning, is composing a 'History of Bristol,' and intends to insert in it some account of Rowley, and those of his works which are in his possession. Mr. Catcott, I fancy, is waiting, in hopes some gentleman will buy his pieces. It is said he has refused two hundred pounds for them. But I believe it has never been offered to him; and from what I could pick out of him on that head, I have reason to think that one hundred or less would purchase the whole. I wish some man of fortune would buy them out of his hands, as it is a pity such valuable papers should be denied to the public."*

It seems pretty clear that Messrs. Catcott and Barrett had entered into a speculation—it is a

* 'Nichols' Illustrations of the Literature of the Eighteenth Century." Vol. iv., p. 571.

question whether they were fully satisfied of the genuineness of the articles they offered for sale: and we entertain some suspicions that they tempted the lawyer's clerk to produce them ancient manuscripts as genuine, without giving themselves any kind of trouble to authenticate their antiquity.

A ferment was, in a short time, excited in the literary world, respecting this singular treasure-trove: yet one or two wiser heads ventured to doubt. Mr. Barrett found it necessary to write to Dr. Ducarel a long letter, on the authenticity of the Rowley MSS., of which the following passage will, no doubt, suffice:

"It is with the utmost concern I inform you, that most of the original MSS. of this excellent writer are lost or destroyed with more than gothic barbarism: that they were carefully laid up, as a sacred deposit, in a chest with six locks, in the church of Redcliff in this city, described in an ancient deed *penes me*, 'Cista servata cum sex claribus in domo thesaurario Beata Mariæ de Redclive;' that on the revisal of these very valuable papers by the vestry attorney, about the year 1748, because they could not be read, and were supposed to relate in no respect to the title deeds of the estates of the church, the chest was left open, the writings and parchments exposed and purloined; many converted into covers for the boys' books at the adjoining writing school; and such ravage committed amongst this curious collection of ancient learning, as grieves one at this time to reflect on.

"It has been supposed, I hear, by the critics, that no poetry can be produced, worthy the name of poetry, betwixt the time of Chaucer and Spenser; as if the Muse slept at that interval, &c. But though I would not seem to enter the list with those able critics, Mr. Johnson,* Mr. H. Walpole,† and others; neither have I time, being too much engaged by other necessary avocations; yet I will assure you

* Dr. Samuel Johnson, who had pronounced against Rowley.

† Horace Walpole, who when this was written was also an unbeliever.

I have some, though few, originals of Rowley, which totally disprove their assertions, and many copies, which if allowed, will place the matter in such a light as to afford matter of surprise to all; it does even to myself. [No. doubt.] We have been taught to believe that a genius for poetical composition, an enquiry into works of literature, researches after antiquities and arts, improvements of sciences, and the like, are nowhere to be found amongst the English till of very late date: what will some say of a society of old, formed in this city for the improvement of architecture, poetry, and painting, the manufacture of clothing, and the like, under the auspices of an eminent Bristol Merchant, the great and good Mr. Canynge. [Mr. Burchell would have said 'fudge.'] I have in my possession, in Mr. Rowley's own handwriting, a description of the cabinet of curiosities coins, manuscripts, &c., of Mr. Canynge, so early as the year 1450, collected many of them by Mr. Rowley himself, who generally adds his name to each manuscript or inscription, thus, "collected and gotten for Mayster Wm. Canynge by mee, Tho. Rowleie.' He searched all the monasteries for ancient Saxon manuscripts, travelled at Mr. Canynge's expense, who was his generous friend and patron; and is ever extolling the genius and abilities of his employer.

"This account, sir, you receive from one who is above the mean artifice of imposing upon any one. [Not too much so.] If anything of that kind has been attempted, as I fear there may, I will be the first to undeceive the public, if ever it comes to my knowledge, or within my power. All the originals, the few that have been preserved, are in my hands; I can prove the age and exact time when most of them were written, by the author's own handwriting; [Nobody doubts it.] the authenticity of some, which are said to be copies from Rowley's manuscripts not in being, I do not assert or deny; many I believe to be genuine, from the similarity of style, measure, and other circumstances."

The idea of Mr. Cannyng employing a traveller ought to have awakened suspicion, if this had not already been done; but the inconsistencies and absurdities of Mr. Rowley were already being properly enquired into.

Dr. Ducarel, however, was so deceived, as to be satisfied that "genuine materials of Rowley's must be extant," and obligingly told Barrett where to find them—on the supposition that Rowley had been Vicar of Redcliffe church. He was very much surprised, of course, about the existence of a Society of Antiquaries, so early as the middle of the fifteenth century; and the cabinet of curiosities almost staggered him. Barrett, in reply, deplored the loss of the original MSS., and wisely denied that Rowley was Vicar of Redcliffe; stating that he was merely "the poetical friend—the intimate associate—of the great Mr. Canyng;" though he thinks he can pronounce him a Bristol man.

The Rev. Dr. Whitaker, the historian of Manchester, a shrewder man and abler antiquary than Ducarel, was allowed an inspection of these extraordinary curiosities.

"He showed me," says the Doctor, "some of Rowley's MS., and particularly a part which exhibited in Rowley's drawing several Roman and inscribed altars, which Rowley says were found in and about Bristol. But the very inspection of them was sufficient to me to prove them errant forgeries. Three or four of them were plainly Roman altars by their shape, and were inscribed Caer Brito, meaning Bristol, as if Bristol was in being during the time of the Romans, or as if the Romans would call it Caër Brit: and one of them had below this inscription these letters,—Vict. F. Ostor, to import that Ostorius reduced Caër Brito. If Rowley was an honest man, he was very ignorant to be so imposed upon; and if he was a knave (which I suspect, for who would be at the trouble to fabricate monuments for him), he was but a poor one."*

Dr. Ducarel applied to the author of "the Reliques

of English Poetry," a writer too well acquainted with our ancient poetry to be easily imposed upon, he replied from

"Northumberland House, January 13th, 1772.

"Dr. Percy presents his best respects to Dr. Ducarel, and is extremely obliged to him for a sight of the curious letter and specimen with which he favoured him. Dr. Percy has seen many former specimens of the same verses, and heard a great deal of the history of the discovery, which, when he has the pleasure to see Dr. Ducarel, he will relate at large; at present he can only say, that their *genuineness* is rather *doubted* till the original MS. can be produced."

The Reverend John Chapman paid another visit to Mr. Catcott. He writes, September 12, 1772, to Dr. Ducarel,—

"He has copies of all that Mr. Barrett has, one piece excepted, and besides the tragedy of 'Ellie,' which seems to me to be worth all the rest. He offered me this tragedy, with the Tournament, another pretty large piece of Rowley's, and three of his Eclogues, for fifty pounds, and I believe would have taken forty. The writer laments he is not able to purchase such invaluable relics to rescue them from the unworthy hands into which they have fallen. He calls Catcott extremely ignorant and illiterate, very vain, and fancying himself as great a genius as the great Rowley himself."

Rowley was going down in the market, and the Barrett and Catcott speculation threatened to prove a bad one. Malone analyzed the ancient poems, and proved, by internal evidence, that they were the composition of Thomas Chatterton, the boy who had represented himself merely as their transcriber. Warton and Tyrwhitt followed on the same side, to the

* Nichols "Illustrations &c.," Vol. p. 580.

same effect: and the controversy respecting the authenticity of these curiosities, which had at one period raged with great fury, was evidently going against the great Mr. Canynge's poetical friend. Such a subject was sure to attract the attention of Horace Walpole. He had very recently published his "Anecdotes of Painters in England"—and might have been thinking of a new edition, when he received a communication from Chatterton, in March, 1769, accompanied by several poems, ostensibly from a collection just discovered: his correspondent, moreover, promised him a list of painters who had flourished in Bristol in the fifteenth century. Chatterton stated himself to be in the employment of a lawyer at Bristol, and desirous of abandoning the legal profession for literature, if Mr. Walpole could assist his views. Walpole at first entertained no suspicion. A cursory perusal of the verses, and the promise of a valuable contribution to the records of Ancient Art in England, gratified him so much, that without giving the subject further consideration, he sat down and wrote to the fictitious Rowley the following letter:—

HORACE WALPOLE TO THOMAS CHATTERTON.

"Arlington Street, March 28th, 1769.

"Sir,

"I cannot but think myself singularly obliged by a gentleman with whom I have not the pleasure of being acquainted, when I read your very curious and kind letter, which I have this minute received. I give you a thousand thanks for it, and for the very obliging offer you make me, of communicating some manuscripts to me. What you have already sent me is very valuable and full of information; but instead of correcting you, Sir, you are far more able to correct me. I have not the happiness of understanding the

Saxon language, and without your learned notes, should not have been able to comprehend Rowley's text.

"As a second edition of my anecdotes was published but last year, I must not flatter myself that a third will be wanted soon; but I shall be happy to lay up any notices you will be so good as to extract for me at your leisure; for as it is uncertain when I may use them, I would by no means borrow and detain your MSS.

"Give me leave to ask you where Rowley's Poems are to be found? I should not be sorry to print them, or at least a specimen of them, if they have never been printed. The Abbot John's verses that you have given me, are wonderful for their harmony and spirit, though there are some words I do not understand.

"You do not point out exactly the time when he lived, which I wish to know, as I suppose it was long before John Ab Eyck's discovery of oil-painting. If so it confirms what I had guessed, and have hinted in my anecdotes—that oil-painting was known here much earlier than that discovery, or revival.

"I will not trouble you with more questions now Sir, but flatter myself, from the humanity and politeness you have already shown me, that you will sometimes give me leave to consult you."

It will be seen from the foregoing that Mr. Walpole, not only greatly admired Chatterton's verses, but was desirous of obtaining them for the Strawberry Hill Press. It is equally clear that he was a believer in their genuineness: but after sending off this letter to Bristol, the writer communicated with his friend Gray, a far deeper scholar in English antiquities, who laughed at his credulity, and easily convinced him that the poems he had received were fabrications, and the whole Rowley story an imposition. Walpole further consulted Mason and other learned friends, and by their united testimony became convinced that the Bristol boy had made a dupe of him.

Walpole was evidently more angry than he ought to have been. That he should be so readily imposed upon, appeared to prove him but an indifferent antiquary in the eyes of the world. He would have gladly recalled the civil letter he had forwarded to Bristol, and buried the whole transaction in oblivion. He, however, wrote again but wrote more cautiously; hinting a suspicion of the genuineness of the papers that had been entrusted to him, and giving his ingenious young friend some good advice, without however holding forth to him any prospect of assistance. The youthful poet replied.

THOMAS CHATTERTON TO HORACE WALPOLE.

"Sir, "Bristol, April 8th, 1769.

"I am not able to dispute with a person of your literary character. I have transcribed Rowley's Poems &c. &c., from a transcript in the possession of a gentleman who is assured of their authenticity. St. Austin's Minster was in Bristol.—In speaking of painters in Bristol, I mean glass-stainers.—The manuscripts have long been in the hands of their present possessor, which is all I know of them. Though I am but sixteen years of age, I have lived long enough to see that poverty attends literature. I am obliged to you, Sir, for your advice, and will go a little beyond it, by destroying all my useless lumber of literature, and never using my pen again but in the law."

It is scarcely necessary to point out the misrepresentations in the letter just given; Walpole observed them and maintained a dignified silence. This produced another communication.

THOMAS CHATTERTON TO HORACE WALPOLE.

"Sir, "Bristol, Corn Street, April 14th, 1769.

"Being fully convinced of the papers of Rowley being genuine, I should be obliged to you to return the copy I sent you, having no other. Mr. Barrett, a very able antiquarian, who is now writing

the history of Bristol, has desired it of me; and I should be sorry to deprive him, or the world indeed, of a valuable curiosity, which I know to be an authentic piece of antiquity.

"P.S. If you will publish these yourself they are at your service."

These audacious falsehoods having no better effect than their predecessors, and there being no sign of publication, after a lapse of two months Chatterton wrote for the last time.

"Sir, "July 24th.

"I cannot reconcile your behaviour to me, with the notions I once entertained of you. I think myself injured, Sir; and did not you know my circumstances, you would not dare to treat me thus. I have sent twice for a copy of the MS.,—no answer from you. An explanation or excuse for your silence would oblige."

The tone of this letter, and the accusation it contained, at first provoked Walpole to attempt a reply, in which he entered into a criticism of the Rowley poems, in no way to their advantage, and hinted that Mr. Barrett could know very little of antiquity if he believed in their authenticity—quite regardless by the way of the application of the same inference to himself. He now declined printing them, and though previously eager to secure them for his press; he stated that he intended to keep the papers that had been entrusted to him, as he believed that they were sent as a device; nevertheless he said that he would send copies if required. On second thoughts he gave up the idea of writing, merely folded up the papers as he had received them, and sent them back to Chatterton on the 4th of August.

Having completely failed in this experiment, Chatterton employed himself in writing for the

periodicals. His position was not agreeable to him, and he was extremely desirous of abandoning his occupation as a clerk, to seek his fortune as a literary adventurer. The ease with which he had imposed on the Bristol antiquaries, and the admiration which his ancient poems had excited, made him fancy that he could realize a fortune by his talents, if he could free himself of his apprenticeship. He was now employed in writing on a variety of subjects, in prose and verse—exhibiting much cleverness, but betraying a total want of principle. Satires, essays, and letters, in a great measure made up of personality and abuse, were written for any paper or magazine that could pay for them. Among other things of this kind, he perpetrated a satirical sketch of Walpole as "the redoubted Baron Otranto, who has spent his whole life in conjectures," and published it in a paper called "Memoirs of a Sad Dog."

In April, 1770, he went to London, believing the great metropolis would be a better field than Bristol for the development of his genius; and for three or four months endeavoured to support himself exclusively by his pen. He soon found such a source of subsistence very precarious: had to endure many privations, and met with many disappointments. He flattered and satirized with great zeal, but with little profit; and gained no friends who could put him into a more creditable way of gaining a literary reputation. He seemed to have entered upon the world of letters like a free-booter—with a determination to live at the expense of any one who came

in his way, who could afford to be victimized. An endorsement in his own handwriting, which he had placed on the back of "a Letter to the Lord Mayor Beckford:" affords a key to his character.

"Accepted by Bingley, set for, and thrown out of the "North Briton," 21st June, on account of the Lord Mayor's death.

	£	s.	d.
"Lost by his death on this Essay,	1	11	6
Gained in elegies - - -	2	2	0
Gained in Essays - - -	3	3	0
Am glad he is dead, by - -	3	13	6"

Chatterton was, in fact, too reckless to succeed in any profession: his papers, from their superficial character, soon failed to attract attention, and he found that he had abandoned a position in which he might have obtained respectability, for one in which he was rapidly sinking into the deepest destitution. In July, 1770, he moved from lodgings in Shoreditch, to others in Brook Street, Holborn, where the same ill-fortune pursued him. In a few weeks more there seemed to him to remain but one refuge from starvation, and this the unfortunate boy embraced: he put an end to his existence with arsenic on the 24th of August, 1770, when he was only seventeen years and nine months old. The next day his body was consigned to the burial-ground attached to Shoe Lane Workhouse: a lamentable end for one whose acknowledged talents, had they been properly directed, might have raised him to high eminence in literature.

Soon after his death Walpole was at the annual dinner of the Royal Academy, when Goldsmith entered the room, and was very eloquent respecting certain trea-

sures in the shape of ancient poems, which had recently been discovered in Bristol. Johnson laughed at his friend's credulity, and Walpole stated his experience of the modern Rowley. The more learned portion of the company evidently did not estimate the treasures very highly, but their sympathy became strongly excited when Goldsmith related the dismal catastrophe that had befallen their supposed discoverer. Walpole too expressed great concern, and declared that he heartily wished he had been Chatterton's dupe, if that could have saved him from so miserable an end.

It soon afterwards began to be rumoured that the dreadful act was to be attributed to the repulse Chatterton had met with from his desired patron, Walpole —and in one or two publications this opinion was unequivocally expressed. Walpole was very indignant, and took the trouble of publicly addressing a letter to one of his maligners, the Editor of "Chatterton's Miscellanies," in which he entered into a minute detail of his connection with the poet, from first to last. In the course of this he very unwisely concealed the existence of his first letter to Chatterton, which was subsequently published in the "European Magazine," for February, 1772; and, from the comments made upon it, he felt himself again forced into the field, to defend his reputation. Some letters from Chatterton to him were also printed in "Barrett's History of Bristol," but Walpole gave Dr. Lort authority to deny, at Cambridge, his ever having received either of them.

Walpole wrote many papers on this subject:* but, in his defence of his conduct to Chatterton, he cannot be acquitted of a certain degree of disingenuousness, into which it is evident he was led by his desire to conceal from the public, how completely, in the first instance, he was the dupe of the forgery that had been submitted to him.† There was a good deal of controversy excited at the time, in which no slight degree of bitterness was sometimes infused by the more zealous partisans of the unfortunate boy; and it is evident that Walpole felt severely the unfavorable construction that was put upon his conduct.

The literary value of the Rowley poems we are not disposed to appreciate so highly as a great modern critic, who pronounces them to be "the most wonderful invention of literature, all things considered."‡ They may be regarded as extraordinary productions from a boy of Chatterton's age,—but their merit is not greater than has been exhibited at a similar period of life by Pope, and other juvenile poets. Their claims, on the score of invention, will not bear a very close examination: deprived of their antique dress, they lose at least half their effect upon the reader; and they

* "Lord Orford's Works." Vol. iv., p. 225 to 245.

† "Compare the language of his first letter to Chatterton with the following sentences:—"At first I concluded that somebody, having met with my 'Anecdotes of Painting,' had a mind to laugh at me, I thought not very ingeniously, as I was not likely to swallow a succession of great painters at Bristol." "Extract of a Letter from Mr. H. W. to Mr. W. B. Lord Orford's Works." Vol. iv. p. 220.

‡ Forster. "Life of Goldsmith." Page. 567.

cannot be regarded as a true expression of the poetical feeling which existed at the period to which they profess to belong.

Some few years previously a man had made himself famous throughout the country, by an imposition quite as ingenious as that of Chatterton. He was a Frenchman: was born in 1679; and, having lived a vagabond life in France, figuring as student, tutor, tavern waiter, pilgrim, and beggar, he assumed the character of a native of the island of Formosa, converted to Christianity. He found an accomplice in a military chaplain named Jones, a Scotchman, who brought him to London, and received promotion in the Church for his zeal, in having effected so remarkable a conversion. The assumed Formosan took the name of George Psalmanazar, and published a "History of Formosa," which the public swallowed as greedily as, in subsequent years, they did the marvellous imposition of Rowley. It went through two editions. Psalmanazar even proceeded further than this. He invented a language which he called that of his native island, into which he *translated* the Church of England Catechism.

The surprising convert was much caressed by the learned, and sent to Oxford to complete his studies; but Dr. Halley, Dr. Mead, and other able men, did not choose to be so easily gulled, and detected the imposture. Psalmanazar soon fell into complete neglect, but managed to procure a precarious existence, by employing himself for the booksellers in

preparing an edition of the "Psalms," in assisting in "Palmer's History of Printing," and in compiling a portion of the "Universal History," published in 1747: he was intimately connected with Bowyer, the printer. One of his last literary efforts was a kind of Biographical Confession, in which he expressed much shame for the imposition of which he had been guilty. He survived till 1763.

Although Walpole was very indignant at Chatterton's attempt to impose upon him, in the course of his own career he affords several instances of having indulged in similar deceptions. In the preface to the first edition of "The Castle of Otranto," he declares that it was found in the library of an ancient Catholic family, in the north of England, and was printed in Naples, in black letter, in the year 1529; and he proceeds, at considerable length, to impress on the reader the conviction that the story was written between the years 1095 and 1243. The Preface to the "Hieroglyphic Tales," assumes them to have been composed in an uninhabited island six thousand years ago. The Parody on "Lord Chesterfield's Letters" professes to have been addressed by a mother to a daughter. Then comes the Letter from Xo Ho, the Chinese philosopher, to his friend Lien Chi, and we could name a few more, but shall be content with the Letter supposed to be written to Rousseau by Frederick the Great—to all intents as complete a forgery as the fictitious productions of Rowley. Walpole quite forgot his own offences in the great-

ness of his anger at the offence of the Bristol apprentice—possibly imagining, that what was the most natural thing in the world, when done by a gentleman of family, was altogether unpardonable when attempted by a boy just emancipated from a charity school.

Perhaps the Lord of Strawberry Hill felt the trick that had been played upon him more acutely, as it was the second time he had been imposed upon by assumed ancient poems. When Macpherson startled the entire literary world by his translations from certain Gaelic poems, said to have been preserved for centuries in the Highlands of Scotland, both Walpole and Gray were delighted with them. They were among the most fervent worshippers of the genius of Ossian, and were fully satisfied that their own country had, in a period believed to have been barbarous, produced a poet who, in an English dress, was thought to rival the great poet of the Greeks.

The Scottish, or rather the Irish Homer, for the Land of Saints has the best right to him, excited as much wonder as admiration. The mannerism of the translator was taken for quaintness, and the obscurity of his phrases was regarded as the true sublime. Fingal and his heroes superseded the mighty warriors who had signalized themselves before the walls of Troy, and the Malvinas and Bragelas took the places of the beauteous Helen and the devoted Andromache. It was to Sir David Dalrymple that Walpole was indebted for the first sight of Mac-

pherson's book,* and the obligation he thus acknowledged on the 3rd of February, 1760:

"I am much obliged to you, Sir, for the Irish poetry: they are poetry, and resemble that of the East; that is, they contain natural images, and natural sentiment elevated before rules were invented to make poetry difficult and dull. The transitions are as sudden as those in Pindar, but not so libertine; for they start into new thoughts on the subject, without wandering from it. I like particularly the expression of calling Echo son of the rock. The monody is much the best."†

On the 4th of the following April he again addresses Sir David on this subject.

"I should have deferred writing till a better opportunity, if it were not to satisfy the curiosity of a friend; a friend whom you, Sir, will be glad to have made curious, as you originally pointed him out as a likely person to be charmed with the old Irish poetry you sent me. It is Mr. Gray, who is an enthusiast about those poems, and begs me to put the following queries to you, which I will do in his own words, and I may truly, *Poeta loquitur*. 'I am so charmed with the two specimens of Erse poetry, that I cannot help giving you the trouble to inquire a little farther about them, and should wish to see a few lines of the original, that I may form some slight idea of the language, the measure, and the rhythm.

"'Is there anything known of the author or authors, and of what antiquity are they supposed to be?

"'Is there any more to be had of equal beauty, or at all approaching to it?

"'I have been often told that the poem called "Hardykanute," (which I always admired, and still admire) was the work of somebody that lived a few years ago.† This I do not at all believe, though it has been evidently retouched in places by some modern hand:

* "Fragments of Ancient Poetry collected in the Highlands of Scotland, and translated from the Gaelic or Erse language." By James Macpherson.

† "Walpole Letters." Vol. iv. p. 22.

‡ Mrs. Halket, of Wardlaw.

but, however, I am authorized by this report to ask whether the two poems in question are certainly antique and genuine. I make this enquiry in quality of an antiquary, and am not otherwise concerned about it; for if I were sure that any one now living in Scotland had written them to divert himself and laugh at the credulity of the world, I would undertake a journey into the Highlands, only for the pleasure of seeing him.'

"You see, Sir, how easily you may make our greatest southern bard travel northward to visit a brother. The young translator ha nothing to do but to own a forgery, and Mr. Gray is ready to pack up his lyre, saddle Pegasus, and set out directly. But seriously, he, Mr. Mason, my Lord Lyttelton, and one or two more, whose taste the world allows, are in love with your Erse elegies; I cannot say in general they are so much admired—but Mr. Gray alone is worth satisfying." *

In a subsequent letter he thanks Sir David for sending to Mr. Gray an account of Erse poetry, for which he was very thankful.† Indeed, the poet was a great enthusiast on the subject.

"I am gone mad about them," he says, in his own emphatic way. "They are said to be translations (literal and in prose) from the Erse tongue, done by one Macpherson, a young clergyman in the Highlands. He means to publish a collection he has of these specimens of antiquity; but what plagues me is, I cannot come at any certainty on that head. I was so struck, so *extasié*, with their infinite beauty, that I writ into Scotland to make a thousand enquiries. The letters I have had in return are ill-wrote, ill-reasoned, unsatisfactory, calculated (one would imagine) to deceive one, and yet not cunning enough to do it cleverly; in short, the whole external evidence would make one believe these fragments (for so he calls them, though nothing can be more entire) counterfeit; but the internal is so strong on the other side, that I am resolved to believe them genuine, spite of the devil and the kirk. It is impossible to convince me that they were invented by the

* "Walpole Letters." Vol. iv. p. 37.

† Ibid. Vol. iv., p. 55.

same man that writes me these letters. On the other hand, it is almost as hard to suppose, if they are original, that he should be able to translate them so admirably. In short, this man is the very demon of poetry, or he has lighted on a treasure hid for ages."

"As to their authenticity," he says in another letter, "I have made many enquiries, and have lately procured a letter from Mr. David Hume, the historian, which is more satisfactory than anything I have yet met with on that subject. He says, 'Certain it is, that these poems are in everybody's mouth in the Highlands, have been handed down from father to son, and are of an age beyond all memory and tradition.'" *

About the middle of April, 1760, Walpole wrote again to Sir David Dalrymple:—

"I have deferred answering the favour of your last, till I could tell you that I had seen Fingal. * * * There are most beautiful images in it, and it surprises one how the bard could strike out so many shining ideas from a few so very simple objects, as the moon, the storm, the sea, and the heath, from whence he borrows almost all his allusions. The particularizing persons by 'he said,' 'he replied,' so much objected to Homer, is so wanted in Fingal, that it in some measure justifies the Grecian Highlander. I have even advised Mr. Macpherson (to prevent confusion) to have the names prefixed to the speeches, as in a play. It is too obscure without some such aid. My doubts of the genuineness are all vanished."†

Gray was not so perfectly satisfied, though equally an admirer:—

"I admire nothing but Fingal," he says, "yet I remain still in doubt about the authenticity of these poems, though inclining rather to believe them genuine in spite of the world. Whether they are the inventions of antiquity, or of a modern Scotchman, either case to me is alike unaccountable. *Je m'y perds.*"‡

Our English Aristarchus, entertained not only a

* "Gray's Works." Vol. iii., p. 249, 257.

† "Walpole Letters." Vol. iv. p. 134.

‡ "Gray's Works."

conviction of their want of authenticity, but was equally decisive in his opinion of their want of merit.

"The subject," says Boswell, "having been introduced by Dr. Fordyce, Dr. Blair, relying on the external evidence of their antiquity, asked Johnson whether he thought any man of a modern age could have written such poems? Johnson replied, 'Yes, Sir, many men, many women, and many children.' He at this time did not know that Dr. Blair had just published a dissertation, not only defending their authenticity, but seriously ranking them with the poems of Homer and Virgil; and when he was afterwards informed of this circumstance, he expressed some displeasure at Dr. Fordyce's having suggested the topic, and said, 'I am sorry that they got thus much for their pains: Sir, it was like leading one to talk of a book, when the author is concealed behind the door.'"*

Although Walpole's doubts of the genuineness of Ossian had vanished in April, they returned with additional force in December, for in a letter of that date, to his friend Montagu, he says:—

"Fingal is come out; I have not got through it; not but that it is very fine—yet I cannot at once compass an epic poem now. It tires me to death to read how many ways a man is like the moon, or the sun, or a rock, or a lion, or the ocean. Fingal is a brave collection of similes, and will serve all the boys at Eton and Westminster for these twenty years. I will trust you with a secret, but you must not disclose it; I should be ruined with my Scotch friends. In short, I cannot believe it genuine. I cannot believe a regular poem of six books has been preserved, uncorrupted by oral tradition, from times before Christianity was introduced into this island. What! Preserved unadulterated by savages dispersed among mountains, and so often driven from their dens—so wasted by wars civil and foreign? Has one man ever got all by heart? I doubt it. Were parts preserved by some, other parts by others? Mighty lucky, that the tradition was never interrupted, nor any part lost—not a verse, not a measure, not the sense! Luckier and luckier!"†

* "Boswell's Johnson." † "Walpole Letters." Vol. iv., p. 196.

James Macpherson, the author of these marvels, was a native of Inverness, in which county he was born in 1738, and was a student at the colleges of Aberdeen and Edinburgh. He exhibited some poetical talent in an original poem called "The Highlands," published in 1758. This was two years before the "Fragments" came out, which drew towards him such general attention. A subscription was readily entered into to enable the assumed translator to explore the Highlands for other poetical treasures, said to exist there; and the result was "Fingal, an ancient Epic Poem, translated from the Gaelic. 4to, 1762," which was followed the succeeding year by "Temora," and other poems. Macpherson was more fortunate than Psalmanazar or Chatterton. He gained powerful friends, who interested themselves in his service. In 1764 he went out to Florida as secretary to Governor Johnstone; and some years later procured the lucrative office of agent to the Nabob of Arcot, which enabled him to obtain a seat in the House of Commons from 1780 to 1790. In addition to his Ossianic fragments, he brought out a prose translation of the Iliad; and put forth claims as an historian in "An Introduction to the History of Great Britain and Ireland;" as well as in his "History of Great Britain from the Restoration to the Succession of the House of Hanover." He also produced some political pamphlets. The fate of the fictitious Ossian forms a striking contrast to that of the fictitious Rowley. The one is entombed with the great in Westminster

Abbey; the other rests with the paupers of Shoe Lane Workhouse. Macpherson died near Inverness, in February, 1796.

Ireland's celebrated forgeries were of later date. In 1796 there appeared in folio a work entitled, "Miscellaneous Papers and Legal Instruments, under the hand and seal of William Shakspeare, including the Tragedy of King Lear, and a small fragment of Hamlet, from the original MSS." Again the learned were deceived: and even some professing that title were ready to acknowledge the authenticity of the documents with a vast deal of reverence and admiration; but, as in the other instances of literary imposture, wiser men came forward and subjected the Shaksperian papers to a rigid scrutiny, which completely exposed their true character; and the author afterwards acknowledged the imposture by publishing an account of the method he had adopted in the fabrication of the manuscripts. This was a "heavy blow and great discouragement" to antiquarianism; as many persons who had hitherto taken to themselves a considerable reputation in such matters of scholarship, had in the most public manner encouraged the deception and stultified themselves.*

* When Samuel Ireland, the father of the alleged discoverer of the Shakspeare relics, opened his house to the world of literature, in order that every one interested in the subject might make a careful examination of the "Miscellaneous Papers, and Legal Instruments," amongst other men of letters who took advantage of the permission, was Dr. Samuel Parr, the distinguished scholar, and Dr. Joseph Warton, the celebrated critic. Boswell having drawn up a certificate vouching for the authenticity of the

documents, it was shown by Ireland to Dr. Parr, who, exclaiming with excessive energy that it was too feebly expressed for the importance of the subject, dictated the following words, and then added his name. His example influenced many persons eminent for their rank and learning, who were assured that they could not but be right in following so great a leader. His certificate ran in this form—

"We, whose names are hereunto subscribed, have, in the presence and by the favour of Mr. Ireland, inspected the 'Shakespeare Papers,' and are convinced of their authenticity."—

SAMUEL PARR.	LAUDERDALE.
JOHN TWEDDELL.	Rev. J. SCOTT.
THOMAS BURGESS.	KINNAIRD.
JOHN BYNG.	JOHN PEMBERTON.
JAMES BINDLEY.	THOMAS HUNT.
HERBERT CROFT.	HENRY JAMES PYE.
SOMERSET.	Rev. N. SCHOMBURG.
ISAAC HEARD, Garter King of Arms.	JONATHAN HEWLETT, Translator of Old Records, Common Pleas Office, Temple.
F. WEBB.	
R. VALPY.	MATTHEW WYAT.
JAMES BOSWELL.	JOHN FRANK NEWTON

Such were the learned Thebans whom a youth deceived by a clumsy fabrication.

"While Mr. Ireland read aloud one of the papers called 'Shakspeare's Profession of Faith,'" says the fabricator in his subsequent confession, "Drs. Parr and Warton remained silent, paying infinite attention to every syllable that was pronounced, while I continued immovable, waiting to hear their dreaded opinion. The effusion being ended, one of the above gentleman (who, as far as my recollection can recall the circumstance, I believe to have been Dr. Parr) thus addressed himself to Mr. Ireland: 'Sir, *we have very fine passages in our Church Service, and our Litany abounds with beauties; but here, sir, here is a man who has distanced us all!*"

"When I heard these words pronounced," young Ireland adds, "I could scarcely credit my own senses; and such was the effect they produced upon me, that I knew not whether to smile or not. I was, however, very forcibly struck by the encomium, and shortly afterwards left the study, ruminating on the praise which had been

unconsciously lavished by a person so avowedly erudite upon the unstudied production of one so green in years as myself."

Referring to this statement in a note to Ireland's book in the catalogue of his library, Dr. Parr wrote, "Ireland told a lie when he imputed to *me* the words which Joseph Warton used the very morning I called on Ireland, and was inclined to admit* the possibility of genuineness in his papers. In my subsequent conversation I told him my change of opinion, but I thought it not worth while to dispute in print with a detected impostor."

The said "Profession" was a very poor production, and certainly would never be put in comparison with the many beautiful passages in our Church Service. Never was so ridiculous a misapplication of enthusiasm.

"I have seen Ireland's papers twice," says Bertie Greathead, in a letter to Dr. Parr;† "the last time with Erskine, who went like Thomas, an unbeliever, and, like him, was convinced by the evidence of his senses. As to myself, I see so many reasons to create suspicions, and so many to dispel them, that I know not what to think. The spelling is certainly strong against their authenticity; it is of a time much more remote than that in which Shakspeare lived. The letter from Elizabeth to him at so early an age, is also very suspicious. But on the other hand, the quantity, the marginal notes in his books (for I suppose you know that Ireland has his whole library) and the style and manner of the few passages I have seen, are strongly convincing.

"On the arrival of Mr. Boswell," continued Ireland "the papers were as usual placed before him, when he commenced his examination of them; and being satisfied as to their antiquity, as far as their external appearance would attest, he proceeded to examine the style of the language from the fair transcripts made from the disguised handwriting. In this research, Mr. Boswell continued for a considerable length of time, constantly speaking in favour of the internal as well as external proofs of the validity of the manuscripts. At length, finding himself rather thirsty, he requested a tumbler of warm brandy and water, which, having nearly finished, he then redoubled his praises of the manuscripts; and at length, rising from his chair, he made use of the following expressions:—

* This is a little at variance with the certificate.

† "Parr's Works." Vol. iii, p. 291.

"'Well, I shall soon die contented, since I have lived to witness the present day!' Mr. Boswell then, kneeling down before the volume containing a portion of the papers, continued; 'I now kiss the invaluable relics of our bard, with thanks to God, that I have lived to see them.' Having kissed the volume with every token of reverence, Mr. Boswell shortly after quitted Mr. Ireland's house; and although I believe he visited the papers on some future occasions, yet that was the only one on which I was honoured with the sight of Mr. James Boswell."

Poor Boswell! On Johnson he has been our best authority: his enthusiasm for his great friend was often very absurd, but Johnson had claims on his enthusiasm which these wretched fragments never could have had. If his father the honest laird was so indignant at his having "taken up wi a Dominie," what would he have exclaimed on hearing of his son's concern in these mock relics.

Although Porson was amongst the number of "the learned," who were led by curiosity to visit the Shakspere MSS., his name does not appear to the certificate. Ireland states, that he had been given to understand, that the professor acquiesced in the several opinions as to the genuineness of the papers, and was therefore requested to sign the certificate. Porson drily answered, "I thank you, Sir, but I never subscribe my name to professions of faith of any nature whatever." He subsequently wrote the following letter respecting the concocter of the hoax.

"Dear Sir,

"I should be very happy to obey your obliging summons. I should equally approve of the commons, the company, and the conversation; but for some time past, my face, or rather my nose, has been growing into a great resemblance of honest Bardolph's or, to keep still on the list of honest fellows, of honest Richard Brinsley's. I have therefore put myself under a regimen of abstinence till my poor nose recovers its *quondam* colour and compass; after which, I shall be happy to attend your parties on the shortest notice. Thank you for returning Mr. Ireland, whom you call an amiable youth, and I think you might have added a modest. Witness a publication of his, that appeared in 1804, entitled, "Rhapsodies," by W. H. Ireland, Author of the Shaksperean MSS., &c., where he thus addresses his book:

"As on thy title page, poor little book,
Full oft I cast a sad and pensive look,
I shake my head and pity thee;
For I alas! no brazen front possess,
Nor do I every potent art possess,
To send thee forth from censure free."

"Though I cannot help looking upon him as too modest in the fourth verse, he certainly underrates the amount and extent of his possessions. He is by no means *poor in his own brass.*"

"After much argument from Dr. Parr on the subject, Sheridan was prevailed upon to make the following concession in favour of the Shakspeare papers: "Shakspeare's they may be; but if so, by God he was drunk when he wrote them."* Young Ireland's account of the part which Sheridan took in the transaction, would however make it appear, that though he entertained doubts, he was not a confirmed disbeliever. After laying down the manuscript of Vortigern, he said: "There are certainly some bold ideas—but they are crude and undigested. It is very odd, one would be led to think, that Shakspeare must have been very young when he wrote the play. As to the doubting whether it be really his or not; who can possibly look at the papers, and not believe them ancient?"†

Sheridan purchased the tragedy of "Vortigern," for three hundred pounds, and half the profits of the performance for the first sixty nights.

Another unbeliever, was the shrewd and critical Ritson. On the first view of the papers he detected the imposition, though he admitted that great skill and genius were exhibited in the forgery. "The Shakspeare Papers," he says, in a letter to one of his correspondents "of which you have heard so much, and which I have carefully examined, are I can assure you, a parcel of forgeries, studiously and ably calculated to deceive the public; the imposition being, in point of art and foresight, beyond anything of the kind that has been witnessed since the days of Annius Veterbiensis."‡

The Shakspeare papers, including a collection of the pamphlets published respecting them, were sold by William Henry Ireland, to F. G. Waldron for eighteen shillings; and were purchased from him

* "New Monthly Mag." July, 1827.

† "Confessions." Page, 137.

‡ "Ritsons Letters," Vol. i. p. 75, see also a further account of them, Page 92.

by Mr. Stevens, the commentator on Shakspeare, for two guineas. At Stevens' sale they produced seventeen guineas. They were again put up to auction in 1827, at the sale of the library of John Dent, Esq., who was said to have purchased them at the price of one hundred and thirty guineas.* There is however reason to believe, that the forgeries themselves, were, in some instances forged; for at the sale of the books and MSS. of Charles Matthews the comedian, a series of the Ireland MSS. purchased by him in 1812, from W. H. Ireland, and authenticated by a letter of that date, were sold for twenty pounds five shillings.

* "Nichols' Literary Anecdotes." Vol. ii. p. 663. "Parrianna," Vol. i. p. 417.

CHAPTER VIII.

COLE'S CORRESPONDENCE WITH WALPOLE.

Among the school and college friends of the younger Horace Walpole, we have mentioned a gentleman of the name of Cole. His father was a farmer at Baberham in Cambridgeshire, and was four times married; his third wife, Catherine, daughter of Theophilus Tuer, and widow of Charles Upthorp, gave birth to William at the neighbouring village of Little Abingdon on the third of August, 1714. The elder Cole was in good circumstances, and afforded his son an excellent elementary education previously to his going to Eton, where he was on the foundation for five years. When he removed to Cambridge, he became a pensioner at Clare Hall, of which he was made a fellow in 1735. After three or four years' residence, he removed to King's College, attained the degree of B.A. in 1736, M.A. in 1740, and was ordained in December, 1744, to a curacy in Suffolk. In 1749, he was collated to the rectory of Hornsey in Middlesex, which having resigned in 1753, he was presented by his friend Brown Willis to the rectory of Blecheley

in Buckinghamshire, whence he dates his first letter to Walpole in October 19th, 1762.*

Mr. Cole had early acquired a love of antiquarian knowledge which gradually increased, and he had become a zealous student of British archæology and heraldic mysteries. He was one of those retrospective scholars, who live, breathe, and have their being in the past. The rector of Blecheley was a virtuoso, deep in the literature of black letter, wise in the craft of first editions, a coveter of rare impressions, a hoarder of scarce copies, a worshipper of illuminated missals, and a hunter after stray chartularies. and fugitive registers. He was a resurrectionist of dead and buried centuries, and escaped diaries, on whose remains he lectured in a constant series of annotations. With an untiring perseverance he continued to collect, arrange, and illustrate all these relics of the past; endeavouring to make their obscurities plain and their meaning significant.

About the period when a regular correspondence was established between him and his schoolfellow, then in the zenith of his reputation, Mr. Cole had acquired considerable celebrity as an antiquarian scholar, and was well qualified to afford valuable assistance in the works which Walpole had in progress. The similarity of their studies recommended them more strongly than ever to each other: and the friends compared notes, sometimes in person, more frequently by letter. Horace forwarded the volumes

* His MSS. correspondence, from which selections will be given in this chapter, formed part of the Strawberry Hill collection.

of his "Anecdotes of Painting." His reverend friend replied with a curious MS., a scarce print, or a letter full of archæological gossip. In February, 1764, he informs Walpole of losses by floods, and of a gain of 100*l.* from a lottery. A few months afterwards he tells him he would be glad to hear of a snug country retirement at a good distance from Paris, in a cheerful and pleasant situation that would accommodate his small fortunes. In this there is probably an indication of the worthy rector's desire to abandon the Church of which he was a professed minister: his love of Catholic relics and Catholic learning having given him an inclination towards the Catholic faith: his idea of a French hermitage, however, was never realised.

Mr. Walpole having asked for some information for his "Anecdotes of Painting," received in reply the following letter.

REV. WM. COLE TO HORACE WALPOLE.

"Blecheley, September 2, 1764.

"I had made a memorandum of the account of my great uncle, Herbert Tuer, which I drew up from my grandfather's papers, and is as follows:—Herbert Tuer, the second son of Theophilus Tuer by Catherine his wife, a niece of Mr. George Herbert the poet (from whence he derived his Christian name of Herbert), was a painter of some eminence, though perhaps little known in England; of which however he was a native—his grandfather and great grandfather being the first vicar of Elsenham, in Essex, the other of Sawbridgeworth, in Hertfordshire, about the latter end of the reign of Queen Elizabeth; yet, by quitting the kingdom, together with his third brother, Theophilus Tuer (my grandfather), in the troubles consequent on beheading of Charles I, they both went into Flanders, in a military capacity; at least my grandfather, who is dressed in

his picture in the habit of an officer, with a great belt across his shoulders: by which means the works of my uncle Herbert Tuer, who settled in Flanders, where he died, are probably little known in England: for marrying Mary, the daughter of one Van Gameren, Procureur of Utrecht, as he is styled in a letter to my grandfather (probably a counsellor, attorney, or some profession of the law), he had by her one son, John Tuer, who survived him, and was settled at Nimeguen, in 1680, with his mother-in-law, Elizabeth Van Heymenbergh, my uncle Herbert's second wife, and widow, of the same country: but whether he had any children by her, or when or where he died, I am ignorant—most likely the last at Utrecht. It is very probable that, on his first going over into Flanders, that he was put under some painter, in which art, after a time, he became a tolerable proficient: as is evident from some small family pictures of his hand, still remaining in the family, on board and copper; one of which is a picture of himself. In a Dutch letter of my grandfather, Theophilus Tuer, who returned into England after the Restoration, there is mention of a head, very curiously painted, to be seen in Painters' Hall, Utrecht, which was the performance of his brother, Herbert Tuer.

"I shall be extremely glad to see the print of Sir Lionel Jenkins, from a painting of his, which you mention; and when I wait on you at the beginning of October, I will endeavour to bring you his picture and some of his works with me, as they are small. I shall think you do both me and my uncle a singular honour if you think him deserving of it. To give him a corner of a plate in the same manner as you have done Isaac Becket, &c. But of this you will be a better judge, both as to propriety and convenience.*

"I can't finish this letter without mentioning an anecdote relating to my grandfather, both as it is an instance of his great accuracy, and as it in some degree connects me to a family, for whom all my family, on father and mother's side, have ever had the greatest veneration, and, as appears by the following note, formerly also (probably by some dependence on it) had the same sentiments. This grandfather of mine, Theophilus Tuer, brother to the said Her-

* Tuer figures in the "Anecdotes of Painting," but not with any particular prominence.

bert Tuer, after his return into England, settled at first with his relations (some of the principal people there) at your borough town of King's Lynn, where his wife's father, Robert Dix, was a woollen draper. He afterwards lived for a time at Downham, in Norfolk, and lastly at Cambridge, where he was a merchant, and being a very worthy, honest, and industrious man, brought up a large family very reputably. He constantly kept a sort of journal of occurrences, and in one of his books is this entry, for which I refer you to the truth of it to your own parish register of Houghton, and which is the reason for my troubling you with all this nonsense about him.

"'The said Theophilus Tuer was married to Mary his wife at Houghton Church, in Norfolk, by Mr. Nesling, Robert Walpole, Esquire his Chaplaine, on Friday, July 12, 1678.'

"'As Mr. Blomefield's book does not take in Houghton, I can't be positive whether Mr. Nesling was parson there; if he was not, it is probable that he lived in your family as chaplain, as was common at that time."

This is a fair specimen of the writer's style and of the extent of the assistance he afforded to his friend, who, by the way, was seldom willing to avail himself of such offers, and had always plenty of them. A letter written in the spring of the following year will be found somewhat different in character from the foregoing. The date closely approaches that of the publication of Walpole's popular fiction.

REV. WM. COLE TO HORACE WALPOLE.

"Blecheley, March 3, 1765.

"The favour of yours of February 28, I received on Friday, and had the post gone out sooner than to-day, should have thanked you for the contents of it. So great is my impatience to see the enchantments of the "Castle of Otranto," I have wrote by this day's post to a friend in Town to send a porter to your house in Arlington Street for the packet, and hope by the latter end of the week to be among my admired friends of the twelfth or thirteenth Century. Indeed, you judge very rightly concerning my in-

difference about what is going forward in the world, when I live in it as though I was no way concerned about it, except in paying, with my contemporaries, the usual taxes and impositions: in good truth, I am very indifferent about my Lord Bute or Mr. Pitt; as I have long been convinced and satisfied in my own mind, that all oppositions are from the ins and the outs, and that power and wealth and dignity are the things struggled for, not the good of the whole; you lead me to this declaration, and I hope what I have said will not be offensive.

"I am sincerely sorry to hear of your cough and cold, and hope by this time, care, warmth, and change of air have set you to rights again. I hope you know me too well to think that I could be so self interested even to wish you a pain in your little finger, that I might be benefitted by it; yet if change of air would be of use to you, I know none better than this place enjoys: how happy would it make me to see you here for one, two, or three days! You have been pleased to say you have been entertained with my rubbish; here are forty volumes all at your service, and no one else in the world. Would not a retreat for two or three days in Lent, according to the custom of the venerable as well as romantic inhabitants of those ages we both are in love with, be of service? Here is nothing to tempt you to such a retreat but what I have mentioned, a well aired bed, warm fires, no company, and a most hearty welcome. I have been so busied in writing and reading all this year that I have not had time to examine a budget of old MSS. sent me out of Cheshire some months ago—indeed the bad hand they are wrote in discouraged me; there is a very long account of the trial of Queen Elizabeth's Earl of Essex: if it is not printed in the 'State Trials,' which I know nothing of, it may be worth your perusal, and if you can inform me whether it is there or not, and whether you would chose to see it, I will transcribe it for you or send you the original, which is very long.

"I am glad you are going to amuse yourself in your bower, which I can easily conceive will be perfect in its kind, though I have not fancy or taste enough to form the plan of it. This will, however, be a means of keeping you in England, and will both amuse and do you good. I hope for the pleasure of visiting it some

time in the Summer, when you are most at leisure. I ardently long for a retreat in some of the cheap and colder provinces of France, and only dread the trouble of a removal and search after one. I had thoughts of going into France for a month this Summer on that errand, and may probably still put them in execution.

"The picture which Dr. Cock had of my ancestors I hardly remember; but I think my great uncle Herbert Tuer is a small picture with a flowing robe about him: whereas my great grandfather and his wife are in the dress of their times—he in a soldier's coat and buff scarf over his shoulders—she in a little black hood: this I mention, as you say you can't well distinguish them."

The reverend gentleman, it will be seen, still hankered after a French hermitage, but his friend tried to put the conceit out of his head by reminding him of the *droit d'Aubaine,* by the provisions of which the property of any stranger dying in France became forfeited to the State. To this in reply, Cole again wrote :—

REV. WM. COLE TO HORACE WALPOLE.

"Blecheley, March 17, 1765.

"I am to thank you for a double favour, first in sending me your book,* and then for your kind letter which soon followed it—for both the one and the other you have my heartiest thanks; and though your book gave me the utmost entertainment, and called many pleasing scenes at Strawberry Hill to my remembrance,† yet your letter was so warmly expressive of the kindest sentiments in respect to my welfare, that I can't express half my gratitude. I was aware of the inconvenience you mention; but apprehend that purchasing a little farm or retreat would take away the horrid and inhospitable law, and make the *Droit d'Aubaine* of no effect, as by that means you become an inhabitant and no stranger. I should

* "The Castle of Otranto."

† The author in the course of his work, made his Twickenham Castle serve him as a model for the Italian one that gave a name to his story.

be glad to be certainly informed about that circumstance, for I am sure I would never think of being there on any other condition: for though you are so kind as to speak of my MSS. with more kindness than they deserve, yet few I suppose would treat them with that indulgence: as to myself, they are my only delight—they are my wife and children—they have been, in short, my whole employ and amusement for these twenty or thirty years; and tho' I really and sincerely think the greatest part of them stuff and trash, and deserve no other treatment than the fire, yet the collections which I have made towards an 'History of Cambridgeshire,' the chief points in view of them, with an oblique or transient view of an Athenæ Cantabrigienses, will be of singular use to any one who will have more patience and preservance than I am master of to put the materials together. These, therefore, I should be much concerned should fall into the hands of the French King's officers; and from your kind hint shall give myself some trouble to find out whether, on my removal to any part of his dominions, my children will be in safety after my decease. Excuse all this long scribble about so uninteresting a subject.

"I who know your facility and ease in composing, am not so much surprised at the shortness of the time you completed your volume in, as at the insight you have expressed in the nature and language, both of the male and female domestics; their dialogues, especially the latter, are inimitable, and very nature itself. I am not sure Lord Essex's trial is printed, because the MS. is so long and so wretchedly wrote; if you have the least desire to see the other Cheshire MSS. which came with it, which are wrote as badly, I will send them and you may return them at your leisure: a great deal is poetry of the time of K. Charles I. From what you have said of the late three vols. of old ballads, I shall send for them: that called 'The Lye,' is among the old MSS. out of Cheshire.

"You may depend upon my best endeavours after the chairs you mention:* I know the sort that will please you, as I have seen those at Mr. Bateman's and much admired them. I will be as

* At this time Mr. Walpole was endeavouring to furnish his Gothic Castle appropriately, and often required the assistance of his friends.

inquisitive as I can, and wish I may be as successful. I suppose as your bower is to contain more rooms than one, other old furniture would be agreeable. I remember in this parish having occasion some seven or eight years ago to visit a sick person, I took particular notice of a very old fashioned wooden chest, in which the family kept their provisions, a sort of original beaufet, with folding doors about four or five feet high. I don't know whether the man would part with it, as he has some property; but if he would, and it would come cheap, I think it would be very suitable to your design. Here are many old oaken chairs of a very clumsy, heavy fashion, but that sort I don't think would please you; the sort at Old Windsor are light, whimsical, sufficiently old fashioned; and I wish I may be lucky enough to meet with any."

Cole liked nothing better than hunting after curious things for his friend to purchase. This is apparent in the following letter:—

REV. WM. COLE TO HORACE WALPOLE.

"Sir, Blecheley, September 3, 1765.

"I had an opportunity about a month since at a clergyman's house in Bedfordshire, [of noticing] a very ancient and noble piece of furniture, which I think would suit you: it is a large cabinet of ebony, almost wholly plated over both withinside and out with embossed silver; the drawers in the inside are painted with stories from 'Ovid's Metamorphoses,' and is in pretty good preservation, considering that it is an old family relique of many generations. I hope after your return from France, that you will either give a look at it yourself, or commission me to purchase it for you.

"I am almost determined myself to set out to Paris, which I never saw, and have a great curiosity to see it, about Oct. 16 and 18, and to stay about a month. If you should happen to be there at that time I should think myself fortunate."

This approach to a determination was soon made still closer. In the winter of 1765, he and Horace Walpole enjoyed a trip to Paris, to the

expenses of which Mr. Cole offered to contribute 100*l.*

The excursion proved extremely agreeable to both, but on the return of the rector of Blecheley, he met with an accident, which was nearly being attended with serious consequences. Nevertheless, it did not prevent his cheating the Custom-house, which process he strongly recommends to the example of his friend whom he had left in Paris. His letter also contains some curious notices of French customs about the middle of the last century.

REV. WM. COLE TO HORACE WALPOLE.

"Blecheley, January 5th, 1766.

"No doubt you will wonder that you received not a letter from me before this, both as you was so kind as to desire me to write, and in acknowledgment for the many civilities I received at your hands while I staid at Paris. The truth is, I was loth to give you that pain and uneasiness, I know I should have occasioned you, had I wrote to you sooner: for in getting out of the ship in the dark, in a very rough sea, into the long boat, which was to convey about thirty or forty of us ashore, about a league at sea to Dover, the boat dashed against one of my feet, and gave me such a jarr as took away the use of my leg, when I landed on the shore, where with the utmost difficulty and pain, and with two people to help me, I got to near the town; but then, falling down and almost fainting, I wrenched my knee to such a degree, that I was forced to be carried to the Inn in a chair and put to bed; where I laid, without being able to get out of it, or turn myself in it, just three weeks: at the end of which I was able to get up for two or three hours in a day, and after just a month's confinement at Dover, I hired a post-coach and four horses, and reached home in five days very easily and comfortably, and can now walk without a crutch tolerably well; so that I

I

hope in a few weeks, with patience and warmer weather, I shall be as well as before. When you come over you will find no difficulty in getting the mate of the ship to take as many things as you please into his custody, and he will bring them to you little by little at a time, on shore. I gave him a guinea and he brought me everything I wanted: so that you need be in no concern about sending over little parcels by any one else. At Dover they are *strick* [strict] at the Custom House in searching for laced clothes, and rummage the boxes quite to the bottom, and at Dartford, they told me, the officers were very exact after run goods, and search very narrowly; though I passed through the town and saw nothing of them. [I] never was more pleased in my life with a gothic building than with the Cathedral of Amiens; every thing so light and elegant, and the doors so richly ornamented with figures. I was sorry I was rather too much in the evening to see the inside to perfection. At Montreuille, if you come after the gates are shut, you need only call to the sentinels, who will be very glad to let you in, with the Commandant's leave, which is never refused, and most frequently practised. I know it was so three times the night I was there. I got in about seven, another company came to the same inn at four, and a third set of English at twelve: if it had not been practicable I know not what I should have done, for the suburbs on that side towards Paris are nothing but huts—the other side, where you lodged, is a good town in respect to that. The inn is the Cour de France, and a very good one.

"At Cambridge they seem to be going mad: last week a grace was actually prepared in the Senate House, in order to petition the Parliament for leave that the Fellows of Colleges might marry: you may easily conceive that it was promoted by the Junior part of the University; how it will proceed I know not, but they are in earnest. I hope the several Overseers of the Poor of the different parishes in Cambridge will prepare a petition also at the same time, requesting that a way may be found out, that the wives, children, and servants —if they can keep any, may not become burthensome to their respective parishes to which they may belong. For surely this scheme must not only end in misery and beggary to the Fellows themselves, but greatly to the discredit of the University;

where, upon this plan each College will become a sort of Hospital.

"We are now in the height of a dispute between Bishop Warburton and Dr. Lowth—the latter has attacked, after some provocation from the Bishop, his Divine Legation, with uncommon spirit, and I think with an inveteracy and sharpness quite equal to anything in the Bishop's own style."

Mr. Cole was also in frequent communication with the poet Gray, then a resident at Cambridge; and makes affectionate references to him in several of his letters to Mr. Walpole. His position at Blechely does not appear to have been very enviable; for he complains of the damage done to a farm of his by the breaking of the banks of the Bedford level, which covered the land with water to the depth of four feet: and resigned his rectory to the grandson of his patron, on the 20th of March, 1767, when he removed to a place called Waterbeche, within about five miles of Cambridge and Ely. This change, it will be seen, was far from bettering his position.

REV. WILLIAM COLE TO HORACE WALPOLE.

"Waterbeche, December 27, 1767.

"One has need of a good share of real philosophy and patience, or such a friendly and kind remembrance of me as I received from you yesterday (though dated the 19th of this instant) to keep up one's spirits, in such a smoky house as I have got into. Had it been free from that trying fault, I should have made no complaints about the wretchedness of its situation and conveniences about it; and I assure you, was it still more inconvenient than it really is, I would stay in it, was it only to claim the promise of seeing you here; where I hope in the summer that I shall be able to provide you a warm and clean bed, if you will excuse the paltriness of the place. That can be no point with you, who will doubly enjoy the

sweets and elegancies of Strawberry Hill after seeing the rusticity of a true fen town.

"I have been here just a month, but have neither been to see or have seen any one here from Cambridge since my arrival. I longed after an hermitage, and I believe I have found the very spot where it was designed to be built; but I could have liked to have been placed where were fewer religious brawls than in this parish, where above half the people assemble in a barn, being the disciples of one Berridge, whom you may remember at Clare Hall, a gloomy, melancholic kind of man, and whose principles are the same you mention in your letter. This man, though now in a college living, yet keeps up a party all over this country, and alternately preaches Methodism among them.

"As I generally take notes in my reading of anything which I think may be curious to my friends, as well as myself, I lately met with an account of a learned society or academia at Florence, which had one of your ancestors, as I conceive, for its president or protector, between 1650 and 1660. I met with it in the 'Mescolanze of Menage,' wrote in Italian. If you have not the book, or have not made the remark yourself, I will transcribe the whole passage and send it to you: he is called Il Signor Walpoole Inglese."

In his next communication Mr. Cole appended the curious account of Signor Walpole, to which he had alluded, preceded by a notice of the writer. To the former we have already referred. The latter is too long for quotation here.

REV. WM. COLE TO HORACE WALPOLE.

"Waterbeche, near Cambridge, February 16, 1768.

"A most violent cold, attended with a fever, has been the occasion of my not answering your last kind letter, with its most valuable present: the latter, particularly the new piece,* came most opportunely to amuse me when nothing else could. It has pleased me beyond measure, and thoroughly convinced me that if Richard

* "Walpole's Historic Doubts."

was no saint, yet he was not the sinner that has been represented. It will be no easy task to refute the arguments you have so masterly drawn up in his favour. That this is spoke out of mere conviction and thorough persuasion of its truth, you may be assured, when I ingenuously tell you, that I began to read it with no small degree of prepossession against the writer, who had treated my good friends the monks so hardly in the Preface: so that I could scarce forbear wishing you wrote more like other people. Such a pen as yours will do them and their cause more mischief in such a volume as yours is, than in all the laboured writings against them since their destruction.

"Sorry I am you could not favour me with a Patagonian,* as I never yet saw the book, or any extract from it. The first notice I had of it was from a particular friend of mine in Cheshire, Mr. John Allen, who wrote me word how entertained he had been with it. Soon after, I met with one Captain Mansell, a gentleman of Northamptonshire, who was in raptures about it; he had *red* it at the Duke of Grafton's, at Wakefield Lodge, in Wittlebury Forest, where it was the only subject of conversation for a time. And this is all I am sorry I can say of it: though, I make no doubt, when I get out of this dirt, and get to Cambridge, I shall be able to meet with it somewhere or other. Bishop Joseph Hall, in an odd quaint which I have got, called, "A Discovery of a New World in the South Indies," printed before he was a bishop, mentions the Patagonians. This was in James' or Charles the First's time, for my edition is not dated."

Mr. Cole soon afterwards removed to Milton on the Ely road, and in the vicinity of Cambridge, where he remained, except at very rare intervals, when making visits, for the remainder of his life. His proceedings are detailed in the following:—

REV. WM. COLE TO HORACE WALPOLE.

"Waterbeche, June 6, 1769.

"Once more [receive] my sincerest thanks for your kind pre-

* A squib of Walpole's.

sent, which Mr. Gray brought me yesterday, and dined with me. I love scribbling in books as much as any one; and I make no doubt but I shall employ it in the service you recommend: whatever the fruits be, you are entitled to them, as well as good Mr. Granger, who was so kind to send me a copy; utterly unexpected, as I had contributed so little, or nothing, to the usefulness of his book. I am still at Waterbeche, but am preparing to fit up and repair my old house at Milton, next week, in order to be able to get into it before Christmas: for, was you to see the place that I now inhabit, you would not wonder at my impatience to get away from it. You are so kind as to ask after me and my present employments. At the end of February I fell ill of a fever, which hardly left me of [for] two months: and indeed I take the bark still: but my comfort in my illness was two MSS. which I copied, and [they] greatly amused me: when I was getting better, and for these last six weeks, I have been backwards and forwards to Cambridge and Ely, at which last place I have been much entertained, as they are now making great alterations and improvements: but church work is slow; and that the writer of the Antiquities of that Cathedral very fully evinces: however, he promises to let the world have the benefit of his lucubrations before the end of the year: yet as I know his natural slowness, I am apt to doubt it.

"We made a curious discovery there about three weeks ago. An old wall being to be taken down behind the choir, on which were painted seven figures of six Saxon Bishops and a Duke, as he is called, of Northumberland, one Brythnoth: which painting I take to be as antient as any we had in England: therefore I was very desirous to have a copy of it taken before it was destroyed, and spoke to one of the prebendarys about it; who ordered it to be left till myself and a gentleman of Benet, an excellent draftsman, went over to Ely. I guessed by seven arches in the wall, below the figures, that the bones of these seven benefactors to the old Saxon Conventual Church, were reposited in the wall under them: and accordingly we found seven separate holes, all of them full of the remains of the said persons, which had been removed from the old church, when that was deserted and the new one erected. Mr. Tyson had taken an exact copy of the picture, which Mr. Bentham

designs to add to his book. A contributor to the plate is wanting; but I imagine that he will find one for it. I wish, for the credit of that book, that your name was to one of the three score plates which it will be ornamented with. Though I guess this plate now wanting won't be less than ten guineas. This I mention, not with any design, for it never entered my head till I came to the line I wrote it on: the propriety of inscribing such a plate to one who has wrote so inimitably on our old painters and painting, gave me the thought above: and though I know your generosity on all occasions where proper, yet at the same time I am aware of your continual expense to oblige the public, who, on these private occasions, may very well find encouragers elsewhere.

"When I have a clean house at Milton, and fit to receive you, how happy will you make me to come there for a few days. Ely will much amuse you, and the new chapel at Clare Hall, and other daily improvements at Cambridge, where a spirit of embellishment prevails, will equally please you. The 'English Topography' I bought on its first appearance, and it highly delighted me. The author, one Mr. Gough, educated at Benet College, in my time, lives in London: a most retired man, and quite unknown while in the University. I long to see you and Strawberry Hill, and will come to thank you for civilities to Dr. Ewin and Mr. Rawlinson, who are in raptures about it. The impertinences of such visits I know you abominate; yet, did you know the happiness you conveyed to Dr. Ewin, I think your humanity would easily sacrifice a little to give so much pleasure."

The commencement of the next letter is a specimen of the corrections which Walpole's "Anecdotes of Painting" received from his friends. The writer goes on to describe the miseries of living in a fen district.

REV. WM. COLE TO HORACE WALPOLE.

"Waterbeche, June 17th, 1769.

"You must remember Mr. Smith of King's College, while you was a member there, and possibly his great formality and exactness; at least I do very well, who continued there so many years after you left it: he is still Fellow and Bursar; and the College is much

indebted to him for adjusting their accounts and managing their estates; but much more for the excellent example he has always set them; and pity it is they so little regard it. I have from under his hand the following corrections in your first volume of Anecdotes, wholly relating to the indentures for building and glazing the chapel, most of which are very material and worthy your notice.

T. 106, L. 18, for *Ct.* read *Cs.* L. 22, for Ryfaas, Gabletts read ryfaut Gablets.

APPENDIX.

No. 1, p. 1, L. 8, 11, 17, &c. for Severick read Semerk. L. 20, for sound read land. p. 2, L. 7. for And on that the seid John Wastell, read And over that the seid Provost, Scolers, and Surveyor, graventen that the seid John Wastell, &c. L. 15, for the time, read the terme,

No. 2. p. 1, L. 17, 18, for And that, read And over that, &c. p. 2. L. 11, for 40, read 60. L. 25, for every Severy at £100; read every Severy 100s., sum £100.

No. 3. p. 2, L. 8, for ryfaat Gaddletts, read ryfant Gabletts.

No. 5. p. 2, L. 28, for twenty foot, read every foot. p. 3, L. 2, for Eightene, read Sixtene. June 21, 1769.

"Since I wrote the former part I received on Monday last your entertaining letter, which met me on my road to Cambridge: the contents gave me double pleasure, as it informed me of your design for Ely; and as it was most seasonable to revive my spirits, at that time much depressed by fears and apprehensions of inundations over my estate, great part of which has been drowned these two years, and is now getting dry again. However, I hope I am safe, bating the fright. This parish which I now inhabit, was not so lucky. On Monday night the bank of the river blew up, and has overflown a vast tract of country in this neighbourhood. I was all yesterday on the water to see their operations; but they will hardly be able to stop it in three or four days. This mischief was occasioned by the rain on Sunday last; longer rains I often remember, but never any so violent for the time it lasted, which was from Saturday night at ten o'clock till Sunday afternoon about three or four. All this part of the country is now covered with water, and the poor people of this parish utterly ruined. I am determined to sell my estate in this

country: every shower puts me on the rack, and I have suffered exceedingly for these last four or five years, besides the continual uneasiness it occasions.

"I will wait on you at Strawberry Hill about Thursday or Friday, July 6th or 7th, in hopes that you will convey me back again to Ely. I will stay with you two days or more, as will be agreeable; and if it could be compassed, should be glad to pay a dining visit to Mr. Granger, if his house is not at too great a distance from you.

"We are going to be full of company and gaiety at Cambridge, where the oratorios and music begin on Thursday next; the new Chancellor installed on Saturday, and the noise and riot not over till Wednesday, July 5th. I think you would not like Cambridge at such a time: If you should, I can accommodate you with my bed, at a clean and neat house, where you might be as quiet as you please; for I can easily get another. Mr. Gray's Ode on the occasion is to be performed on Saturday. I am told it is much liked, both as to the poetry and music. He leaves Cambridge for Cumberland immediately after the Commencement is over, whither he goes with his friend Mr. Mason for the summer. I shall see him to-morrow, if my cold and sore throat, which I caught on the water yesterday, does not prevent me.

"I don't know whether you are in jest or earnest in respect to Mr. Percy, but I design seriously to write to him; but take no notice from whence I had the hint."

In November, 1770, Mr. Walpole's correspondent supplies him with the political news of his county. He writes:—

"We are all in confusion on the death of the Marquis of Granby; the seat was offered to Sir Joseph and Sir John Yorke; both refused it at first, but it was understood that Mr. John Yorke had accepted it: however, on the morning of the nomination day, when the gentlemen were all met, Lord Hardwicke informed them that his brother's ill health did not allow him to accept the offer. This occasioned no small confusion, as no one was thought of besides; so the meeting adjourned to that day sennight, November 16th. In

this interval Lord Mountford produced his nephew, Captain Charles Cadogan; Sir Sampson Gideon offered himself, as also a young gentleman, one Mr. Brand, and Mr. Panton's son of Newmarket. In case Mr. Cadogan does not succeed, Sir Sampson has Lord Hardwicke's, Lord Mountford's and the Bishop of Ely's interest; Mr. Brand has that of the Duke of Bedford's: and the county is now getting drunk in every quarter of it. Thank God it can't be long in dispute."

It will be seen from what follows, that the writer must have lived the life of a water-rat. It would require a hydropathist to explain how he could have existed under the operation of such a cold water cure as he was subjected to.

REV. WM. COLE TO HORACE WALPOLE.

"Milton, Nov. 28, 1770.

"I was at Cambridge, at Mr. Bentham's, all last week, both on account of the election, and that I might not be left to myself on such repeated misfortunes as befall me. This is the third time within six years that my estate has been drowned, and now worse than ever: indeed I expected it could be no other, from such incessant rain and bad weather, When things are at the worst it is to be hoped they will mend.

"Mr. Brand left his friends in the lurch without ever taking leave of them; so left the field open to Sir Sampson Gideon. I knew neither of the gentlemen; but he was so far engaged with my Lord Mountfort, on his nephew, Captain Cadogan's account, who was first proposed, that I am very happy there was no further contest, as it would have been impossible for me to have obliged you; though I had no kind of regard for Mr. Brand's opponent, and a great one for himself, both as your friend, son to our school-fellow and a very worthy young gentleman, as by his friends' report.

"It pleases me beyond measure that you are going on with the last volume of Painters. I suppose Bannerman wrote to you, as he said he designed, when I sent to him on the receipt of your first letter. He seemed much pleased to be employed by you, and

thought the difficulty of his residence at Cambridge not much, as the conveyance was daily all the year through. I will be ready to do everything you will please to commission me in order to forward so good a work."

Mr. Bannerman was one of the young engravers introduced by Mr. Cole to his friend Walpole. The reader will hear more of him presently. The following extract is in reference to a proposed "History of Gothic Architecture," which Walpole had suggested.

HORACE WALPOLE TO THE REV. MR. COLE.

"Strawberry Hill, August 12, 1769.

"The plan, I think, should be in a very simple compass. Was I to execute it, it should be thus: I would give a series of plates, even from the conclusion of Saxon architecture, beginning with the round Roman arch, and going on to show how they plastered and zig-zagged it, and then how better ornaments crept in, till the beautiful Gothic arrived at its perfection; then how it deceased in Henry the Eighth's reign!—Archbishop Wareham's tomb at Canterbury being, I believe, the last example of unbastardized Gothic. A very few plates more would demonstrate its change: though Holbein embroidered it with some morsels of true architecture. In Queen Elizabeth's reign there was scarce any architecture at all; I mean no pillars, or seldom; buildings then becoming quite plain. Under James a barbarous composition succeeded. A single plate of something of Inigo Jones, in his heaviest and worst style, should terminate the work; for he soon stepped into the true and perfect Grecian. The next part Mr. Essex can do better than anybody, and is, perhaps, the only person that can do it. This should consist of observations on the art, proportions, and method of building and the reasons assigned by the Gothic architects for what they did. This would show what great men they were, and how they raised such aerial and stupendous masses, though unassisted by half the lights now enjoyed by their successors. The prices and the wages of workmen, and the comparative value of money and provisions at the several periods should be stated, as far as it is possible to get materials. The last part (I don't know whether it

should not be the first part) nobody can do so well as yourself. This must be to ascertain the chronologic period of each building. And not only of each building, but of each tomb, that shall be exhibited; for you know the great delicacy and richness of Gothic ornaments were exhausted on small chapels, oratories, and tombs.

"For my own part, I should wish to have added detached samples of the various patterns of ornaments, which would not be a great many; as, excepting pinnacles, there is scarce one which does not branch from the trefoil—quatrefoils, cinquefoils, &c., being but various modifications of it. I believe almost all the ramifications of windows are so, and of them there should be samples too.

"This work could not be executed by one hand; Mr. Tyson could give great assistance. I wish the plan was drawn out, and better digested. This is a very rude sketch, and first thought. I should be very happy to contribute what little I know, and to the expense too, which would be considerable; but I am sure we could get assistance—and it had better not be undertaken than executed superficially. Mr. Tyson's "History of Fashions and Dresses" would make a valuable part of the work, as, in elder times especially, much must be depended on tombs for dresses. I have a notion the King might be inclined to encourage such a work; and if a proper plan was drawn out, for which I have not time now, I would endeavour to get it laid before him, and his patronage solicited. Pray talk this over with Mr. Tyson and Mr. Essex. It is an idea worth pursuing."

This subject was frequently referred to in the letters that passed between Milton and Strawberry Hill at this time.

This being the period when some of the Fellows of the Antiquarian Society thought proper to call in question the extent and accuracy of Mr. Walpole's researches, his reverend friend exhibited a very friendly zeal in his behalf, and never refers to his opponents without a great deal of indignation. Walpole professed to treat his adversaries with

superlative contempt: but he was evidently very indignant, and withdrew himself from the Antiquarian Society because one or two of his assailants were members of it.

In the next communication Mr. Cole alludes to the proposed work on Gothic architecture.

REV. WM. COLE TO HORACE WALPOLE.

"Milton, January 3, 1771.

"The reason why I did not answer your last earlier was, that Mr. Gray told me he should be in town, and call on you very shortly. My present reason for troubling you is a report that Mr. Essex has heard that Mr. Sandby was at Canterbury about a fortnight ago, employed by his Majesty to take draughts of King's College Chapel, and was to return again in about a month or two, to take other measurements, with a design for publication. As Mr. Essex, so long ago as 1756, printed proposals for such a design, has all his drawings ready, and is excellently skilled in the theory, as well as practice of Gothic architecture, as appears by his having already erected altar-pieces in the Cathedrals of Lincoln and Ely, and now actually putting up one in King's College Chapel, in the same style and not in the motley manner of those usually given for Gothic even by some of the best modern architects, it is a pity this design should go out of the hands of a person so well qualified for it, and who seems to have a sort of title to it. He therefore desires me to mention to you with what propriety his treatise on that kind of architecture would come into a description of that royal chapel, and how ready and willing he is to set about it immediately, if his plans and designs could be laid before the King by you or any other mediation. He will, at any warning come up to town, and bring his papers and drafts with him, that you may judge whether they are worthy of such a patronage. Whoever attempts to give an account of the Chapel can never hope to do it with the accuracy of Mr. Essex, who sent me the following account of what he has already done in this affair:—

"'In the year 1756, and scaffolds being erected to the highest points of the four angular towers of King's College Chapel, which

were completely repaired, under my inspection, I used this opportunity of taking dimensions of all the parts of them, and have made a perfect elevation, section, and plans of the several parts. The like opportunities have been taken to make an exact section of the great vaults, and taking all other necessary measures for describing every other part of it. I have likewise the exact measures of the east, west, and side windows: the general plan of the whole building and vaulting; the finials, and all the principal parts, not to be measured without scaffolding; and if any part remain not taken, they are within reach. I have a fair drawing of the vault and its plan, a tower, or one of the angular turrets, an elevation, section, and plans of it. A plan and elevation of the basement of a tower, with the mouldings at large. The east end, with a design for a new altar. The measures for drawing all the other parts, which should be described at large.'

"Mr. Essex, I know, is in earnest, and has long wanted to prosecute this work; how it has been retarded so long is not my business to enquire. I don't love to be thus troublesome, but my regard to Mr. Essex, and love to Gothic architecture, which I think will thrive well in his hands, has made me get over my usual scrupulousness in these matters.

"I was at Cambridge to dinner on Tuesday, where I met a gentleman of Trinity College, who has promised me to ask Mr. Topham, a Fellow Commoner of that college, and an etcher, for his prints, and will bring them to me when he gets them: I have an access by a friend to Mr. Orde, of King's College, and hope to procure those of his etchers. Sharpe, an ingenious tradesman of Cambridge, has etched a few, and I will assuredly get them for you, and make you up a packet and send them together. I don't recollect whether you are curious about Roman antiquities: however that may be, a gentleman of my acquaintance at Cambridge brought me hither last week three prints of an old stone urn, if such it be, found at Chesterford, near us. It was etched by a clergyman, a Dr. Gower, who is a physician at Chelmsford, in Essex—one of which is appropriated to you. Boydell's design, under your inspection, will be admirable; I long to see it, but am fearful that it will be too expensive for common folks; for engravers are now so saucy they

know not what to ask. I have lived so long to see a shilling print now advanced to five. I hope Bannerman has wrote to you his readiness to undertake anything you will please to employ him about. That is the work I most long to see. Mr. Bentham's book advances with a slow and solemn pace. Church works, especially such great cathedrals, are never quick in their execution, but when finished surprise by their majesty and grandeur. If the book won't run a parallel on all fours with the comparison, I dare presume to say it will not disgust the reader by its subject, or the manner of treating it; but I must needs say that he is one of the slowest of mortals; everything is ready, and yet it is put off from week to week."

As Mr. Cole was not amphibious, he was wise to get rid of his landed property, for causes related in the following :—

REV. WM. COLE TO HORACE WALPOLE.

"Milton April 18, 1771.

"That I have never answered your letter of many months past must be accounted for by my untoward and unlucky situation. Ever since I had the honour of attending you on a tour in Northamptonshire, &c., we have had nothing but wet seasons, one following another, and I have been a continual sufferer; but never so bad as by last November's floods, which totally drowned all our country, and when it will be dry again God knows. This has been a constant damp upon my mind, and every shower put me on the wrack. Thank God, I have got rid of this plague and anxiety by parting with my estate, which, instead of being of service, was a continual uneasiness to me, and of no great advantage. Within these three months, in consequence of these calamities, one tenant broke, by whom I lose about £400. I am sorry I have wrote so much on a disagreeable subject, and which I know will give you pain; my reason for it was in order to disculpate myself in not writing to you; but in good faith my mind was never at ease enough to sit down to write to my friends. I yesterday finished a very long letter of queries to Mr. Granger, which I had begun on 6th March, and could never get myself into a disposition to finish. I believe near two months ago

Mr. Tyson brought me two small heads of the old Marquis of Winchester (Packet), who was Lord Treasurer under Henry VIII., Edward VI., Queens Mary and Elizabeth. It is etched by him from a painting in the possession of Dr. Glynn, Vice-Provost of Kings' College, and M.D. I have also for you several other small prints from Mr. Topham, of Trinity College, and Sharpe, of Cambridge. Mr. Ord, of King's, is in France, and has been these twelve months; so his can't be got till his return. I only wait for a convenient opportunity of sending them to you. I am glad to hear you were no great sufferer by your house being broke open.

"The master of Magdalen College, Dr. Sandby, some two or three months ago, desired me to give his compliments to you, and gave me a note or two, which I have mislaid, relating to a royal author, which he conceives you have omitted; it is Charles II, whose account of his escape after the battle of Worcester, by himself, is printed lately by Dalrymple, from a MS. in the College Library. I much wish to see you at Milton this summer, that we may go together to Ely, which, by Mr. Essex's skill, is now made one of the noblest, grandest, and finest things of the sort in England. It is, in short, like no one cathedral besides, and is a singularity you will not repent the trouble of a journey on purpose to see. The east window would make it glorious; and it is a most lamentable thing to have fallen into such hands as Pearson, who has skill and abilities had he application equal to them."

Mr. Cole was very useful to his friend at Strawberry Hill in various ways. He added to Walpole's collections, he copied manuscripts for him for publication; and even employed himself in compiling a Catalogue of the Strawberry Hill varieties. The next letter mentions his services as a transcriber.

REV. WM. COLE TO HORACE WALPOLE.

"Sir, "Milton, Sunday, June 16, 1771.

"I herewith return you seven original letters of King Edward VI to Mr. Barnaby Fitzpatrick, together with my copies of them. I found no difficulty in transcribing them, as they are all written in that large school boy's hand which it is easy to decipher. Two

of the letters have suffered a little damage in two or three lines, by means of the softness of the paper on which they are written; for being doubled or folded up, and often unfolded, the paper is cracked, and the words quite worn away; one line is also lapped and pasted over another line, and so become illegible: however, as good luck has ordered it, Dr. Fuller, in his 'Church History,' Book vii. p. 409, and 413, has printed one whole letter and part of a second; and by so doing, one of the illegible lines is recovered. The other would have been preserved had he printed the whole letter. If you consult his book, you will find him a very faithful transcriber, except that he has not followed the original orthography, in which I am scrupulously exact, as well as in the original abbreviations; otherwise he has made very few mistakes, and was of use to me in my copying one of the letters in more places than one.

"At page 411 of his book, he has also preserved the King's private instructions to his favourite, in what manner to behave at the French Court.

"At page 408, he mentions a circumstance curious enough, was it authentic, relating to the Lord Rich, his resignation of the Seals on account of a mistake he had made in sending a letter to the Duke of Norfolk which was intended for the Duke of Somerset. 'To the Duke,' seems to be rather too concise an address for so formal and circumstantial a method used in that age. The King, in one of these letters says, on account of the Lord Rich's sickness, the Seals were given to Goodrich, Bishop of Ely, to hold during the session. This seems to contradict the affirmed story told by Dr. Fuller. It is certain the King seems to know nothing of it, by the tenor of his letter.

"Strype, in his 2nd Volume of 'Memorials,' pages 287 and 331, mentions these letters, but has carefully marked what I thought written by the King, and what appears to be in another hand-writing.

"I wish to see these papers printed by you, who have the art to enliven subjects seemingly the most barren; not that I think these letters come under that notion. The seeming coldness and indifference of the young king's narrative, concerning his own uncle's trial and execution, manifestly shows in whose hands he then

was; how insensible he was to the ruin of his own blood and family; and how little reason there is in Fuller's 'Conceit,' page 425, that King Edward's consumption was occasioned by his grief for the death of his uncle. His scruples concerning the mass seem to have taken a more intimate hold of his conscience.

"I have, to spare you some trouble, slightly looked over 'King Edward's Journal,' which is printed in the appendix to the second volume of Burnet's 'History of the Reformation,' page 32, in order to find whether he mentions any circumstances relating to Mr. Fitzpatrick, and only see his name recorded at pages 36 and 62, to which I refer you. Fuller, page 412, says that Barnaby Fitzpatrick, on his return to England, was created by the King Baron of Upper Ossory, and that he died a most excellent Protestant. No wonder! Two religious houses added to his own patrimony, was a most infallible argument to confirm his faith in the doctrine of Calvin.

"If you find no better motto for the title page, this remark of honest Fuller, page 424 may serve. 'If Papists superstitiously preserve the fingers, teeth, yea lockes of haire of their pretended saintes, wonder not if I prize the smallest reliques of this gracious prince.'

"The similarity of the subject has made me subjoin copies of two or three letters which I transcribed from the originals in Benet College Library. Two of them from a Princess Cecily in the reign of Queen Elizabeth, which, though the subjects of them are of no consequence, yet they are curious in this respect, I suppose, as coming from a daughter of King Edward IV, who must have been very antient in 1567. I take her to have been Viscountess Welles, but not having Sandford, am not sure of my fact. If I am not right, I know of no one who can set me so, so well as yourself. The other is no less a curiosity, being a letter from the famous Earl of Leicester, and shows the hospitality, popularity, and manners of the Queen, in the beginning of her reign. They were all three addressed to Archbishop Parker.

"P.S. I think I have ranged King Edward's letters in the order of time.

"I have sent you a print, just published at Cambridge by Mr. Lambourn, designed as a frontispiece to a little book describing the

plants in our botanical garden, of the late Dr. Walker, Vice-Master of Trinity, whom you may possibly recollect by the print, it is so like him. Mr. Martyn, of Sydney, Professor of Botany, publishes the book for the benefit of the garden, which he generously takes care of gratis, as the revenue to support it falls very short. Dr. Gooch begged the print of Mr. Martyn two or three days ago; but I imagine I shall easily get another. I accidentally met with the print of Mr. Brian, of Bury, designed by Mr. Kent, in a cottage at Linton.

"Copies of three original letters bound up in a MS. volume in Benet College Library, in 'Cambridge Miscellany,' tom. cxiv.

"To the most hoñrable and my singular goode L. my L. th' Archebysshop of Canterbury, his goode Grace.

"'My Goode Lorde.—A servaunte of myne, Simon Bowier, one of my Gentlemen, hath desired my Lres of Requestes to yr. L. for the next Advowson of the Vycaradge of Blagbourne, in Lankyshire, now in the occupacon of one John Hilton, whose simple peticon as I could be contented in a greater matter to advaunce, so in this I maye not reasonably denye; desiringe yr. L. to further his sute in such sorte, as he may finde himselfe gratefied, and I by yr. gentlenes towardes him, bownde to requyte yr. good L. with the lyke as occasyone hereafter may serve. CECILIA.'"

The letter does not seem to be written by the same hand as the signature, which is large, black, and seemingly not straight, as if wrote by an infirm and shaking hand. The seal is an antique of a woman's head.*** It is at p. 347. W. C.

"My verie good Lorde,—Yr. late courtesie shewed to one of my gentlemen, enforceth me to thank you hartelie therefore, and might have stayed me any farther to trouble you; but that my chapplen John Wittins (whose sinceritie I dare by proofe comend me to yr. L.) moveth me somewhat in his behalf yet ones againe to requeste yr. gentlenes towardes me: that yt may please yr. L. at the instannce of thes my Lres., to graunte unto him yor favorable Lres. for th' obteyning of the personage of Abchurch in London, in the Gyfte of the Quene's Matie., who useth not to passe any suche Grante wthowt yor L. assente (as I am enfourmed) wherein yf it

maye please yor L. to further him with yor beste favor, I shall thinke myself dooble bownde unto you; and as occasyon shall serve endevr to requyte you.

"From Arundell Howse, the viiith of Februarij, 1563.

"CECILLA."

There is no direction remaining to this original letter. The date seems to me to be 1563. Perhaps it may be 1567—the only year when that living was vacant, according to Newcourt, from 1560 to that year.—WM. COLE.

"To the right honoable and my singular good Lorde my L. of Cant'bies Gra c

"My L.—The Q. Matie. having being abroad hunting yesterday in the Forrest, and having had veary good happ, beside great sporte, she hath thought good to remember yor. Grace wt. pt. of her pray, and so commaunded me to you fro her Highness a great and a fatt stagge, killed wt. her owen bowe hand. Wch. bycause the wether was woght, and the dere sumwhat chafed, and daungerous to be caryed so farre wtowt some helpe, I caused him to be pboyled in this sort, for the better prservacon of him; wch. I dowbt not butt shall cause him to com unto you as I wold be glad he shuld. So having no other matter at this psent to trouble yor Grace wtall, I wyll comytt you to th' Almighty, and with my most hearty comendacyons take my leave in hast, at Wyndsor this iiiith of September.

"Yor G. assured,

"R. DUDDELEY."

The reader will see in the next letter, the sort of spirit with which Mr. Cole regarded his friend's opponents.

REV. WM. COLE TO HORACE WALPOLE.

"Milton July 9, 1772.

"I should have liked your book better had there been more of your own, and less of mine in it. I wish your preface had been longer; though short as it is you have lengthened my credit, and done me an honour I have a great reason to be proud of. I have not seen the Vice-Chancellor since I received your present; though at Cambridge for this last fortnight there has been little else but

oratorios, music, and balls: but the weather was too hot for me to go among them—so that I have seen no one all the time, except the squire of the parish, as they call him here, a rich clergyman, who called on me yesterday morning. This gentleman having about five years ago purchased the chief part of the parish, has to my no small mortification taken it into his head to like the situation, and is now actually building a good house to reside in. When I made choice of this place for my residence, one of its recommendations was in its privacy and solitude.

"If I said in my letter that a new print of Mr. Gray was very like him, I made a mistake, or expressed myself improperly. The print I meant to speak of was of Mr. Mason himself sitting in a chair—and is a striking likeness.

"I had not heard of Mr. West's death; but Foote's ridicule on the society I heard much of—for Mr. Gough, the topographer, with whom I am but slightly acquainted, with a Mr. Haistwell, another of the London antiquaries, being on a visit to Mr. Tyson, and Mr. Nasmyth, both antiquaries of Benet College, where the two former also received their education, made a party to dine here one day. Mr. Nasmyth is going to print two volumes in the nature of Hearne's publications, containing three or four old historians in that college library. One of the Whittingtonians,* guessing my real sentiments had yet an inclination to be further satisfied, and asked my opinion concerning your great stumbling block to the president, Richard III. which, he said, had been answered two or three times—I told him I thought your book was one of the most ingenious that had appeared—that the title of it shewed that you meant not arbitrarily to establish your doubts in certainties, which yet would be no easy task to contradict; and that if your book was answered, it was news to me, who had never heard of such answers. A London antiquary, whose name and performance I have forgot, (so conclude he was no very redoubtable antagonist), was mentioned, together with Dr. Milles, and the paper which Mr. Masters read last winter at the society; and which, it seems, is to appear in the second Archæologia. The mention of this man reminds me of what Mr.

* Mr. Cole alludes to the antiquaries who published some very erudite papers respecting Whittington and his Cat.

Knight, the rich clergyman mentioned above, told me yesterday in my garden. On some occasion, his name being brought up, Mr. Knight asked me if I had not heard of an affair relating to him, which happened the week before last. I told him no: for that I had seen no one from Cambridge since the commencement. He said, that this man was much suspected and talked of at Cambridge, as having defrauded, stolen from, or cheated the county hospital of some paltry sum, out of one of the basons, in which they collected the money on that occasion (the oratorio) for the use of the hospital. I said they deserved to be so cheated, (as his dirty character was universally known), for trusting him to finger any part of their money, which would naturally stick to his fingers like birdlime. What the particulars are I have not yet heard, not being curious to inquire about it too much, as my former connexions with him might give occasion to think I was too much delighted to hear any thing to his discredit. I must own one loves to have such adversaries.

"I take it, that Anthony Wood means no more at page 56, than that Sir Thomas Wyatt went to Oxford to hear the lectures, which Cardinal Wolsey had lately founded in that University, though the fact to me, is very doubtful: especially as Mr. Baker, in a note upon the passage, on the margin of his copy, has these words:—

"'One Sir Thomas Wyatt, Knight, was of St. John's College, Cambridge; but whether this Sir Thomas, or his son, I am not sure. It must be the father.'

"These notes of Mr. Baker, I many years ago copied from his book into my own. The reason, I apprehend, why Mr. Baker made such an observation (as Wood owns that Sir Thomas was of St. John's College) was, that it was not unusual for Anthony thus to filch eminent Cambrige men and engraft them at Oxford, where perhaps, they spent no part of their time. Yet we have great obligations to honest Anthony, for preserving and producing many curious materials for the lives of Cambridge men, which would not so easily have been met with without him.

"The Cardinal founded his seven lectures at Oxford about 1520, some time before his great foundations at Christ Church, as it is now stiled.

"The passage in the glossary, at the end of Peter Langtoft's Chronicle, page 641, relating to Sir Thomas Wyatt, is as follows, taken from a MS. of Dr. Nicholas Harpsfield, Archdeacon of Canterbury, in New College Library, bearing this title:—

"A Treatise of Dr Nicholas Harpsfield's, concerning Marriage occasioned by the pretended Divorce between King Henry VIII, and Queen Katherine.

"The author reciting Queen Catherine's virtues, thus proceeds: 'I have credibly also heard, that at a time when one of her gentlewomen began to curse the ladie Anne Bull' [with whom Sir Thomas Wyatt the elder, had had carnal pleasure, before the King married her, as Sir Thomas himself told the King, when he endeavoured to disuade his Majesty from the match, because her conversation had been very loose and base, if you will believe what this author observes in another place] she answered, 'Hold your peace, curse her not, but pray for her; for the time will come shortly when you shall have much neede to pittie and lament her case,' and so it chanced indeed."

At the commencement of the next epistle the reverend writer appears in quite a new character.

REV. WM. COLE TO HORACE WALPOLE

"Milton, August 25th, 1772.

"My harvest not being yet got in, though very near it, makes it impossible to stir from home at present. I talk in the stile of a farmer, yet am very little concerned in the transactions about farming; yet I find it necessary to be on the spot while the winding up of the year is in hand. I have this year eight loads of wheat, four of oats, one of barley, and I hope four or five of pease and beans; and thank God, all in perfection, as I am told; therefore it is to be expected from the general good crops, that the poor will find the benefit of it, and that it will contribute to the lowering of the price of provisions.

"When I reflect on the advantage you offer me of entertaining me at Strawberry Hill, an opportunity that most would catch at, I stand amazed at myself for my not doing so too; but I will be sincere with you, Sir, who have ever patronized me from my early

youth; I am grown so indolent and inactive that I hardly ever stir farther than Cambridge, there very seldom. I had not been at Horseth these fifteen months, though repeatedly solicited, till last week for two days, when it was impossible to refuse it; nor at Sir John Cotton's these two years, though he has been here three or four times. The only chance I have of seeing Strawberry Hill, will be my taking an opportunity of going to town with Lord Montford for two or three days, and then coming to you.

"I believe in all my epistles, I have never told you how strangely I have spent all this spring and summer; I accidentally met with the two 'Folio Registers' of Croyland Abbey and Spalding Priory. I have thought them so curious that I have almost transcribed them both; and though I have worked like a horse at a mill, from morn to night, and rarely going out, yet I assure you, I am not tired of my employment, though thank God, I am drawing to a conclusion, to the benefit of my eyes.

"Your mention of the statues at York puts me in mind of a circumstance of which I forgot to send you an account. Last year in repairing Bishop Alcok's Chapel at Ely, among the rubbish very carefully concealed, was found a most elegant small statue in marble of King Henry VII. Mr. Bentham drew up an account of it, and Mr. Tyson copied the figure; and though it is judged by all who ever saw it, to be a most striking resemblance of that King, and the place or tomb where found, would in a manner ascertain it to be no one else; yet the Antiquary Society, to whom both were sent, from the shape or fashion of the crown only, unanimously determined it not to be a statue of Henry VII, and took very little, or no notice of it; to the no small mortification and disappointment both of Mr. Bentham and Mr. Tyson."

The following narrative describes one of those lamentable tragedies, which at this date not unfrequently occurred from improper treatment of the insane.

"I can't help relating to you a most shocking accident that happened in this county this week: the family I am much acquainted with, and the poor unhappy gentleman was a Fellow-Commoner,

I think in your time or soon after, of Peter House, from whence his father took him after two or three years' stay, to the Inns of Court, and sent his [him] abroad on his travels. The young man was a remarkable handsome person and a great favourite of his parents, who were of the chief families of this county, with an estate of about 1500*l.* per annum. The father, Mr. Nightingale, was a very sensible man, and an acting Justice of the Peace; but violent, and for some time before his death, thought to be disordered in his intellects. The son was confined in a mad-house for some years before his father's decease, I suppose these twenty years: but on the death, the beginning of this year, of the elder brother, who had the management of the estate, Mrs. Nightingale, the mother, a very worthy woman, and who had a pique against her third son, who had married against her inclinations, in order to deprive him of the benefit of looking after the estate, determined to send for her eldest son out of the mad-house, probably thinking that by her care of him, he would behave with some sort of propriety. Accordingly he was sent for home, and occasionally went to market to Royston now and then, and paid bills, &c. However, this week a mad fit overtook him, and going into the yard, he ordered the servant who used to attend him to get him his horse immediately; the man told him he had not breakfasted, but that he would go in, and get it and wait on him forthwith: this did not satisfy him, but swearing at him, ordered him to get the horse directly: the fellow foreseeing that all things were not right, runs into the parlour to Mrs. Nightingale, who came out and told her son that if he went on at this rate he must be sent up to London again: upon which, he immediately knocked her down with his fist, and getting a stake, beat the poor woman so, breaking three of her ribs and her skull in two places, that she died on Thursday. Mr. Hopkins, the Surgeon of Cambridge, who attended her the two or three days she survived, asked him if he meant to kill his mother. He answered, 'God forbid,' but said he meant to kill the servant. I am much concerned, as I have long been acquainted with the family.

"Lord Montford is going to be married to Miss Blake, sister to Mr. Blake who married Sir Charles Bunbury's sister. Most people think the lady has good courage."

As has been before mentioned, Mr. Cole was consulted by his friend on various subjects; often on prints and historical pictures. On one of these occasions he gave the following reply :—

REV. WM. COLE TO HORACE WALPOLE.

"Milton, October 3rd, 1772.

"I am afraid you will think my long silence, ever since August 28,th e date of your last letter, very ill-mannerly, but I was unwilling to multiply letters upon you unnecessarily; and I could not, before to-day give you a satisfactory answer to some queries in it. On my receipt of it, I accidently the day after fell into company with the Bishop of Lincoln's chaplain, who was going to Bugden, and promised to give me all the information he could pick up, relating to the two pictures you enquire after. The picture on the staircase of two young men, after the manner of Vandyck, is of a Duke of Florence and his Secretary. The other, in a large room, of some lads, and damaged, belongs to the family of Howard, Earl of Stafford, the popish family. This is the information I had from Dr. Gordon yesterday.

"I don't know whether you have seen it, but I saw t'other day a good mezzotinto folio print of the famous Mr. Mudge, the watchmaker; it is a private plate, and if you have no access to him, who I am told has left off business and retired into the west, I will do my endeavour to get you one. I am acquainted with a friend of his, to whom the print was sent. Count Brulh was the occasion of its being engraved. I have enclosed with Mr. Newcome's print a little etching by Mr. Tyson, of a remarkable ear of Italian wheat, sent by the Dean of Gloucester, Dr. Tucker, to Mr. Commissary Graves; as also another etching by him, of a fish which was exhibited to the Royal Society this year, an account of which, with the drawing, is in their Transactions for this year, Part First.

"Though I gave you no account of it, immediately on your letter of August 25th, I waited on Dr. Browne, the Vice-Chancellor, with your message of thanks to him, and said all that was proper on the occasion. I should have informed you of this, with his answer, in a letter of September 1st, on my sending him one of King Edward's

letters, as from you: his words are, 'I am much obliged to you, &c., —Mr. Walpole we knew would set a value upon any reliques of his friend, which induced Mr. Mason and myself to think of the present, Mr. Walpole so kindly accepts. I will desire the favour of you to return him my particular thanks for the honour he had intended me, I thank you much for the letters of Edward VI, and it is with some satisfaction I observe, that for this present I am obliged to you both, —to you for making the request; to Mr. Walpole for his compliance.'

"This is the whole of his letter, which I would enclose, but for making it double. My reason for sending Edward VI letters in my own name, though begged for him, was, that in your letter to me I had no direction from you to send it in yours. What occasions my confusion in this affair, is this:—On Thursday I dined with the Master of Benet, and the Vice-Chancellor was there; he told me he had lately received a very kind letter from you on this subject: and I could find by what he said to me, that had I done as I ought, you might not have been put to the trouble of a second letter. I beg pardon for my negligence, and will amend if I can. In good truth my real reason for not writing sooner, and my best excuse, was the daily expectation of seeing Dr. Goodon from Buckden.

"On Thursday I was told at Benet College, by Mr. Wm. Cole of Ely, that his brother, Mr. Charles Cole, a Counsellor and Recorder of Cambridge, who lately (this year) gave a new edition of that scarce book of Sir William Dugdale, 'The History of the Fens,' is now going to give us a new edition of the Baronage also: I shall be very glad of it, as it is a book I have long wanted, but found it too expensive to purchase. One Mr. Guest is to be at the expense of it, as he was at the other.

Mr. Cole possessed a valuable collection of engraved portraits, and the readiness with which he assisted antiquarian scholars in the production of any work in which his information or collection could be of service, attracted towards him persons who were engaged in similar pursuits. Making collections of prints employed the time and means of more than

one gentleman of fortune at this period. One of the most industrious of these, Mr. Gulston, waited upon Mr. Cole, and requested permission to inspect his treasures: this not only was granted but the reverend collector in the most liberal manner placed at the stranger's disposal, whatever prints he most desired. Perhaps he made the offer merely as a compliment, in the same way that an oriental host proclaims his house and all he possesses are at the disposal of his visitor: but the dismay of the poor Rector may be imagined when the stranger coolly selected *one hundred and eighty-seven* of his best prints, and walked off with them. In stating this to his friend, he adds, "When he was gone I could not but recollect the infinite difficulty of your delicate scrupulosity in even not too long looking at any head you might wish to have, for fear of an offer of it." In his reply Walpole was extremely indignant at such conduct, and termed the offender "an Algerine hog." Both at first thought that nothing was to be expected from a man who could take such an advantage of another's liberality; and as he for a long time seemed quite regardless of the inferences that might be drawn from his conduct, nothing seemed left them but to abuse him to each other—which they did in good set terms; eventually, however, Mr. Cole was satisfied with an equivalent in books.

It may be supposed that so very *zealous* a collector was no ordinary character. Joseph Gulston, Esq., of Ealing Grove, was the son of a wealthy merchant by a Portuguese mother, from whom he

inherited a large fortune, which he squandered away in all sorts of extravagant follies. Among other plans of getting rid of it, was one for forming a collection of prints, which he commenced in the year 1768. With this object in view he bought up or caught up every species of engraving—and it was with the assistance of his unrivalled collection of British portraits, that his friend Grainger compiled his useful work. Mr. Gulston found it necessary to dispose of these treasures, After vainly offering them to the Empress of Russia for twenty thousand pounds, they were sold by an auction which continued for forty days, commencing on the 16th of January, 1786. The collection comprised :—

The Works of Rembrandt, in three volumes of portraits, historical and landscape subjects. A fourth volume forming the school of this master contained the works of scholars arranged chronologically.

Works of Raphael, two volumes; one by Marc Antonio, the other of old engravers.

Etchings of the Great Painters, arranged in schools and in chronological order, three volumes.

Wood Engravings, in the same order, one volume.

Landscape and Cattle Engravings, two volumes.

Dutch and Flemish Schools Engravings, one volume.

French School Engraving, one volume.

Albert Durer and other German Masters, one volume.

Wierolter, two volumes.

Waterloo Landscapes, one volume.

Bartolozzi, three volumes.

Vandyke's Portraits, three volumes—the first and second containing etchings, the Vanden Enden impressions, proofs, and unfinished prints.

Foreign Portraits, eighteen thousand.

English Portraits, twenty-three thousand five hundred.

Hogarth, three volumes—one original, two of copies.

Bunbury, two volumes.

Caricatures, Humorous and Political Prints, twenty-six volumes, with many original drawings; forming altogether, with the two preceding masters of humour, eleven thousand—being all published in this country.

Topographical Prints of Great Britain, fourteen thousand five hundred; with a collection of topographical books, interleaved and enriched with MS. notes.

It seemed that Mr. Gulston had much over-estimated the value of his collection, for it produced little more than seven thousand pounds—much less than was sufficient to satisfy his numerous creditors; and the difficulties occasioned by his improvidence had so serious an effect upon his health, that, in a few months, he sunk into the grave, at the early age of 41. He died July 16, 1786, a notable example of the mania of collecting.*

Mr. Cole, writing on a subject in which both were deeply interested, said,—

"Mr. Gray's head is elegantly engraved in the same size, and copied from Mr. Mason's print, by one Henshaw,† an extraordinary genius for engraving, which arose at Cambridge, without any one's taking any notice of him till just now."

In a letter of a later date, he says,—

"Mr. Gray's print is only a copy from one done by Mr. Mason, and a little touched up by him with a black lead pencil, and, by Mr. Gray, given to me about four years ago. This I lent to Mr. Henshaw. Since that there is another print of Mr. Gray, by one Sharp,

* Nichols' "Illustrations of Literature of the Eighteenth Century." Vol. v. p. 30.

† Mr. Cole took a friendly interest in this young man's success, as will be seen in a subsequent letter.

of Cambridge, but a very bad one, from the same original print by Mr. Mason. Mr. Henshaw is a young engraver at Cambridge, son to a gunsmith there, and nephew to one Mr. Stevens, an engraver and printseller at Cambridge, in your time, whom you possibly may remember. He had a good fortune left him in Yorkshire, and his nephew was with him for about eight or nine months, which is all the instruction he has had: but it is a great pity he has not the advantage of a London or Paris education, which would make him one of the greatest of his profession."

In another letter he complains of want of civility in Dr. Lort, in withholding information about the Freemasons, and adds,—

"I am sorry to inform you that Lord Orford has been, and continues to be, dangerously ill at Chelmsford, where Dr. Batty from London, and the Professor and Dr. Glynn, from Cambridge, attend him constantly. He was apprehensive, by an eruption on his hands, that he had got some cutaneous distemper, and was advised to take Mandunt's drops, which struck the humour inwards, and occasioned a delirium which possesses him now. They talk of moving him to London as soon as possible."

Writing from Milton, on May 3, 1773, he says,—

"I entirely agree with you in your notions of Mr. Gough: Mr. Farmer, of Emanuel, a most sensible, reasonable man, told me three or four months ago, that he thought the worse of the Society for making him the Director, who, he said, was no way equal to such a task. I thought as he did, and assure you I never met with a poorer creature, or duller mortal: how they came to pitch on such an animal is inconceivable: and yet his book is entertaining and useful, mentioning the honorable amende of the University, by the Public Orator, on presenting Mr. Walpole for his Honorary Degree.

"I sent a letter to young Henshaw, with what you mentioned relating to Bartolozzi, and yesterday morning, at six o'clock, his father was in my stable with my servant, with the following letter, and went away directly The son came by dinner, and seemed to be much concerned for his father's absurdity; wants to go to Italy with Mr. Bartolozzi exceedingly, burst into tears at his father's

behaviour; said he would willingly, and could, give him 100*l*., if that would be accepted. It is cruel when a gentleman puts himself to the trouble and inconvenience of endeavouring to serve other people, to find abuse instead of thanks. But I will say no more, such is the world and mankind:—

"'FOR THE REV. MR. COLE, AT MILTON.

"'SIR,—My son shewed me the letter you sent him—I was greatly surprised. I think he is very well settled, if he knows when he is. He shall never have my consent to go abroad, to lose all his business: neither would I advance a shilling, and as he is not at age to judge for himself, I think it my duty to judge for him. I have done great things for him, considering my capacity. I know where the scheme was laid, and for what reason. I am, Sir, your most obedient humble servant,

"'JOHN HENSHAW, Cambridge, May 1, 1773.'"

Cole wrote to the son, declining further interference, and insinuating that his father was mad. Mr. Walpole, however, succeeded in getting young Henshaw placed with Bartolozzi.

In another communication he mentions a painter named Marlibrunus, a Jew; "the most skilful painter in the whole world, who dwelt at Billingsgate, in the time of Edward I;" and states, that for his eminence in his art, we have the authority of the oath of King Edward I before Adrian, Bishop of Tartary, and the Pope's Legate, 1291. "No doubt," he adds, "you have so common a book as 'Newcourt's Repertorium,' Vol i., p. 765, where is the whole story." He then expresses his concern at having heard that Walpole intended giving up publishing, and hopes he will alter his mind. The fact was, Walpole had been greatly annoyed by the opinions of some of his brother antiquaries.

"I hope your Reflections on the Fate of Collections may not be wholly true. I am sure the very thought of such a collection as you are master of being dispersed, makes one shudder."

With this feeling, it was fortunate Mr. Cole did not live to witness the dispersion. He adds—

"That he has been, since 1765, in expectation of the living at Burnham near Eton—his brother quits it for Warplesden, near Guildford, and he has been promised it; but, having been disappointed, will not be certain till he is in possession."

Walpole, on learning the probability of his schoolfellow becoming his neighbour, writes,—

"I must repeat how glad I shall be to have you at Burnham. When people grow old, as you and I do, they should get together. Others do not care for us: but we seem wiser to one another by finding fault with them. Not that I am apt to dislike young folks, whom I think everything becomes, but it is a kind of self-defence to live in a body. I dare to say, that monks never find out that they grow old fools. Their age gives them authority, and nobody contradicts them. In the world one cannot help perceiving one is out of fashion. Women play at cards with women of their own standing, and censure others between the deals, and thence conclude themselves Gamaliels. I, who see many young men with better parts than myself, submit with a good grace, or retreat hither to my castle, where I am satisfied with what I have done, and am always in good humour. But I like to have one or two old friends with me."*

In a subsequent letter Mr. Cole acknowledges Mr. Walpole's politeness in interesting himself in the Burnham living, of which he has long had expectations, but having laid out five or six hundred pounds on his present house, is loth to give it up entirely, though the opportunity it would afford, of seeing his friend occasionally, is an addition to the benefice of no small value.

* "Walpole Letters." Vol. v. p. 360.

In the next letter we find the attention of the antiquary directed to things of more immediate interest:—

"Milton, October 5, 1774.

"We are at Cambridge, in the very centre of riot and confusion. Mr. Cadogan and Mr. Jenyns, who have served for the town with approbation, seems to have tired the mob and a factious party (who can allege nothing against them) by their mere long continuance in that service. Two people, without ever being heard of three months ago, one of them named Meek, a timber merchant from Lambeth, and the other a Mr. Byde, of Hertfordshire, people utterly unknown, and unconnected with any of the corporation or county, have been searched out, and brought to Cambridge to stir up an Opposition. It seems to me as if they would shake the *old* interest, if not carry the day, which happily is on Saturday, otherwise, had not the late measure been adopted, of dissolving the Parliament, there would have been the same riot and mobbing for four or five months longer."

The next letter refers to Dr. Whittaker, and his erudite history of Manchester,—

"Milton, April 29, 1775.

"Your criticism on Manchester is admirable: such as no one could make but yourself: it is literally true: I am told, within this fortnight, I think by Mr. Lort, that it is supposed that his intellects are a little deranged: perhaps it may be so? and that his second volume may have amused me the more for it. I wish we had less of the Romans, and more of Manchester. I am sorry to find you rather disposed to banter the sublimity of Mr. Bryant's learning: for my part, who never pretended to much more than was sufficient to make me spell my own language right, I never aimed to understand it; but because I saw Dr. Apthorp and other pedagogues, at Eton and Cambridge, perfectly idolize the book and its author, I implicitly subscribed to what I took for granted, and did not understand—which in general is no bad method. I read part of the book, and wondered at his learning: yet even I had my doubts, which I knew not how to solve. But, in short, as you observe, if one was to

go on in this manner, the one-half of life would be spent in learning, and the other in unlearning; and, in this case, the blockhead is a more rational creature than the greatest scholar. By-the-bye, when I was at Burnham I saw Mr. Bryant several times: he is very civil and was remarkably kind and obliging to me: and, I mention it as a secret to you, he mentioned your name several times to me: was much disposed to call on you: said he had unluckily failed waiting on you for some time, but meant to call at Arlington-street. Whether he has done so or not I am ignorant. He was then, I know, in the very crisis of authorial flattery; and whether he wished to have your sanction, to me seemed probable. I am sorry to find so good, so exquisite a judge, at one blow, knock down all the puffs of the reviewers. These last are a race of mortals I know nothing of, no more than they do of me. I only have learned to hold them in the same contempt that you do for many years. I am one of the twelvepenny readers, as I find it useful to know new publications: but their judgments I rely on as you do. Neither they nor Mr. Bryant shall know what has passed on their score: I am only concerned to find that the greatest of all scholars is likely to dwindle into a doubtful etymologist."

Mr. Cole, at this period, was a great sufferer from the gout: but this rarely diminished his zeal for antiquarian research; a specimen of which, illustrative of the Walpole family, will be found in the following:

"Milton, June 9, 1775.

"My gout is [has] chiefly left me, but pains in my back, sore throat, fever, still make this excessive hot weather very troublesome. Dr. Heberden's hypothesis of the wholesomeness of damp, seems however to be confirmed by one circumstance, and that a very material one. In France they hardly know what it is to put on an aired shirt or a dry pair of sheets. I have bad sheets brought to lay on my bed, that might almost have been wrung; and was told it was never otherwise.

"I am very happy to be able to inform you that Sir Jeffery Burwell's wife was daughter and sole heiress to Thomas Derehaugh, Esq., of Colton Hall, in Badingham, in Suffolk, whose family had

been possessed of the Manors of Gedgrave and Trayford, 6 Edw. VI. of Burstonhaugh, Badingham, and Wicklowes, with lands in Peasinghall, Sibton, and Heneningham, 8 and 13 Eliz. and gave for arms, which you ought to quarter—Or, on a bend cotized Sable, 3 Martlets, Or.

"The family of Burrell, or Burwell, was of Knight's degree, and seated first at Colton Hall, in Badingham, in Hoxon Hundred, by marriage with Derehaugh, and afterwards removed to Rougham, in Thedwestre Hundred. They bare—Argent, a Sattire Gules, between four oak leaves, vert, on a chief Azure a lion's head erased between two Danish axes, Or. These are somewhat different from those in your windows: but the green leaves shew them to be the same in effect. In King Charles II's time, Sir Jeffery Burwell sold Rougham to Robert Davers, Esq.

"It is a double pleasure I have in thus being able to send you the name of your great-grandmother, Lady Burwell, especially after a fruitless disquisition by a King-at-Arms. I should be excessively vain, and plume myself prodigiously upon such an advantage, did I not owe my knowledge to a little MS., containing the antiquities of the Suffolk families, by a Sir Richard Gipps, a good antiquary of that county in the last century. It was lent to me many years ago by Mr. Soame, of Thurlow, who had it as a present from Lady Barnardiston. I have copied the MS. into my 28 vol.; and, if you have an eager desire to see it, though intermixed with an hundred out-of-the-way rubbish of my own, I will send you the volume; and you the only person I would send it to, as I know you (your) nicety of honour, in not communicating or shewing it to any one else. Lady Burwell's Christian name is unluckily omitted.

"I am glad Antiquity has such an advocate as you: whether in joke or earnest. I have been amused and entertained with the study of it all my life. How much more amusing must it be to you who have ancestry, than to me who have none, is too obvious to remark. But even to me, the tracing connections is very entertaining. I rather think your confounding Walpole and Whaplode is a mistake. Whaplode or Quaplode, as it is called in ancient deeds, is a very large village near Spalding, in Lincolnshire, in marsh land, and at no great distance from Walpole in Norfolk.

The family of Whaplode gave for arms—Barry of six pieces, Or and Azure, over all a Bend Gules, which are quartered singly by Sir Nicholas Bacon, Lord Keeper, and are over the door of Benet College Chapel to this day, he being a contributor to the building it. These are the same arms which are in your second window of the gallery at Strawberry Hill; which are the very same with those of Gilbert de Gaunt, Erle of Lincoln; temp. Hen. III; who was a benefactor to Spalding Abbey, near Whaplode, from whom, perhaps, as was not unusual, the family of Whaplode, from alliance or descent, might take the same bearing. However, if there is a family in Lincolnshire, of the name of Whaplode, who give the arms of Walpole, no doubt your reasoning is good."

In the next communication the writer laments the loss of an able antiquarian scholar, whose great biographical work had already been pronounced a valuable illustration of our national history. Towards the projected "Biographia Britannica," however, it is evident he was less favourably inclined.

"May 30, 1776, Milton.

"I am ashamed when I look at your letter, informing me of the death of poor Mr. Granger; whose loss to the public and his friends no one can better judge of than yourself. For my own part, I lament him as a worthy, honest, good creature; a person calculated for the part he undertook, and which, in all probability, will be now neglected. I hope his papers are got into your hands, where they will be safe: but the materials got together, and possibly compacted for another volume, will be an irreparable loss to the public, except you can put them into some inquisitive stirring person's custody, who may complete what he has began so successfully under your auspices. I shall ever lament his loss, not only on this account, but his own.

"Mr. Gough wrote me word lately, that a new Biographical volume is going forward, under the inspection of Dr. Kippis, a Dissenting Minister, who made some figure some two or three years ago, when the Clergy were petitioning against their mother. Mr. Gough wanted me to assist him. I told him his worthies were

such as had no niche in any of my temples. A new volume would be very useful and pleasant: but coming through Dr. Kippis's hands must give it a tinge I cannot relish."

For several months subsequently to the date of the preceding, Mr. Cole's letters were filled mostly with accounts of his sufferings from the gout, or other matters equally uninteresting to the reader. In the following February the subject of his correspondence becomes more interesting:

"Milton, February, 21, 1777.

"I have lately read a little scandalous book against King James I, by Sir Anthony Weldon, with an answer to it called 'Aulica Coquinaria'; or a Vindication in answer to a pamplet intituled 'The Court and Character of King James,' pretended to be penned by Sir A. W., and published after his death, 1650, London, 1650, supposed to have been chiefly written by Godfrey Goodman, Bishop of Gloucester, who died a Roman Catholic in 1655. In this book, which if you have not met with, you will be pleased to see many curious anecdotes of that time, on the Bishop's own knowledge; in particular, a complete vindication, and pretty long, of the old Countess of Exeter, accused of adultery or fornication with the Lord Ross, her son-in-law. If you have not the book, I will send you mine.

"Poor Dr. Dodd, though I never saw his sweet face at the Magdalen or elsewhere, excites my pity. I tremble for him to-morrow, and hardly see a glimmering how he can escape the halter. In alleviation to his crime, the only thing to defend him is the general corruption of the times, and that many who ride triumphantly, deserve it full as much. We have an odd affair of the sort just now broke out at Cambridge, where our friend Dr. E——— who is greatly disliked there, and reasonably suspected to be linked in with a parcel of people who constantly advertise to lend money to nobility and gentry; one King of that fraternity this time twelvemonth, sent letters nominative to every fellow-commoner in each

college, and to many pensioners who were supposed to have fortunes in reversion, with offers of money. A young man of Trinity applied to Dr. E. who lent him 800*l.* with a bond of 1300*l.* when he came of age, which was near at hand. This has been discovered, and occasions no small talk, even to degradation &c. A clergyman, also, in the neighbourhood, to whom I sold my Fen estate, is now breaking, in numbers of people's debt, to the ruin of many. Thank God, I took my money of him early, though much pressed to retain it."

A few days afterwards Mr. Cole wrote again, in answer to some enquiries Walpole had put to him :—

"I congratulate you on your fresh acquisition to your Lancastrian portraits, and wish I could decipher the arms; but any attempt to that seems vain, as you seem to say that part of the picture has suffered most, and you know not whether the bearings are ducks or martlets—as these kinds are totally different, the one having a large bill and a long neck, and the other no bill at all, and the shortest of necks, they may possibly be somewhat else. I take it they should be thus blazoned. Party per fess Argent and Sable, a Pale countercharged, on the argent, three birds sable, impaling argent, three bulls heads caboshed sable, which are the arms of Walrond; viz., the second or impaled coat. As to the first, I can give no account of it at present, but will have it in my mind. It is most likely, as you observe, that he was a retainer to the Court, and giver of the altar-piece. I have hunted in many books for benefactors to the abbey, but can find none to whom the arms suit.

"Your other questions are easier to solve. The King, Humphrey Duke of Gloucester, Archbishop or Cardinal Kempe, Cardinal Beaufort and Babington, were much connected with St. Edmund's Bury Abbey. In the first place, King Henry VI, in the twenty-second year of his reign, 1433, spent his Christmas in that monastery with his Court, and stayed there four months, viz., to St. George's Day following, April 23. This is taken no notice of in any of the historians I have consulted, not even by Hall; but in a MS. copied by me into one of my volumes, from the papers of the late Sir James

Burrough, Master of Caius College, a good antiquary, a Bury man, and one who made great collections for that place, is a long account of his transactions there during that time. Till you show an inclination to borrow more, I will only transcribe his leave-taking, after he, the Duke of Gloucester, and the rest of the nobility, had been received into the confraternity of the Abbey, by which they were made participants of their prayers and good works, &c.:—

"'Quamobrem Rex præfatus in Recessu suo prostratus coram Deo et B. Martyri St. Edmundo, devotas et humiles exsolvit Preces; et tandem surgens, sequace Duce Gloucesteriæ, et aliis nobilibus transiit in Domum Capitularem, ubi immediate accersito Abbate (licet ibidem Patronus et Fundator exiterit) velint tamen, ut asseruit, sicut cæteri nobiles, recipe in dicti monasterii numero fraternale: Quem Abbas in conspectu circumstantium nobilium paucorum, juxta Petitionem regiam, mox pie et devote recipiens, datoq. Osculo in Signum fraterni vinculi, indictum numerum aggregavit, participem fieri omnium suffragiorum. Missarum et aliorum bonorum in perpetuam iniit commendam. Et hinc paulo post, astantibus nobilibus supradictus Dux. Glouc. prostratus coram Rege, ipsum miserabiliter imploravit, quatenus supradicto Abbati, propter Humanitatem, quam erga se, et suos, in Donariis et Expensis indefessam reddiderat, regratiari dignaretur Regia Celsitido, quem Rex sine Intervallo per manum hilariter recipiens, ei gratias retulit multiformes, et valedicens omnibus, se et suos, Deo et B. Edmo. dictiq. Abbatis et confratrum suorum Precibus intime commendavit.'

"Many years after this from the same MS., viz. in 1446, on the Feast of St. Scholastica, a parliament was holden at Bury, in the presence of the King, who sat in his chair of estate within the refectory of the Abbey. The Archbishop of Canterbury, John Stafford, opened the session with a discourse taking for his text, 'Qui ineunt Pacis Consilium, sequitor illas gaudium.' Prov. xii. 20. Upon which he shewed that between the Ambassadors of the King and the French King, order was taken for a personal interview or talk of these Kings: and sufficient assurance had for the King's passage beyond seas, for his safe being there and like return: in

which case the King was bent to use their counsel, and therefore had called them together. At this parliament, Humphrey, Duke of Gloucester was arrested, and on the 23rd of February was found dead in his bed. Hall, p. 192, gives this account of the transaction 'The Duke, the night after his imprisonment, was found dead in his bed; and his body shewed to the lords and commons, as though he had died of a palsy or empostome; but all indifferent persons well knew that he died of no natural death, but of some violent force.' He was carried from St. Edmundsbury to St. Albans for burial."

In the same MS., is this list of nobility and gentry who were received into the fraternity of St. Edmund Bury Convent in 1440, which I send you only as a curiosity, and not relating to your queries.

"'Memorandum, quod Ao. Dni., 1440, receperunt Fraternitatem capituli nostri 6 Die Martij.

"'Humfridus Com. Buck. Hert. Staff. Northampt. et Perchie.
Anna uxor ejus.—Humfridus et Henricus Stafford filii ejus.
Anna de Vere filia ipsius Comitis.
Hen. de Bourgchier Com. de Ewe et Dus. de Bourgchier.
Johes. Bourgchier ejusdem filius. Isabella Veray, Eliz. Drury,
Eliz. Culpeper—Johes. Salveyn. Hen. Drury, Will. Wistowe.
Walt. Percevale.'

"In the same MS. is this, which shows the connection of the Beauforts to the Abbey.

"'Ao. 1436, Oct. 4, Litera Fraternitatis concessa Henrico Dei Gratia, Titulo Sci Euschii S.S. Rom. Ecclesiæ Presb., Cardinali de Anglia vulgariter nuncupato, in qua Pater ejus Johes. Dux. Lancastriæ vocatur, Alter monasterii Sci. Edmi. Fundator.' Thomas Dux. Exon, vir sanctissimus. Cardinalis dicti Frater apud seum. Edmundi humatus.' By this you see that the Cardinal and Duke Humphrey, were both nearly connected with this abbey. Cardinal John Kempe, was Archbishop of York from 1426 to 1452, when he was translated to Canterbury, where he died the year after, and had been a busy man in all the intrigues of King Henry's court. As to Babington, there never was such a Cardinal; nor indeed a Bishop

of that name but one, who was made so in Queen Elizabeths reign, and died in her successor's. It is probable that Mr. Ives meant Mr. Babington who was Abbot of St. Edmund's Bury, in 1447 and who had been President or General of his benedictine order in England. v. Batteley's Antiq. Rutuss: App. 161.

"The Duke of Exeter's body, prefect, was lit upon among the ruins of the Abbey at Bury, about four or five years ago. Mr Callam the Surgeon there cut off one of his hands, and has it now in spirits."

The next letter alludes to Walpole's connection with Chatterton, which, having fully detailed in another place, we shall not trouble the reader with any further comment.

"Dear Sir, Milton, June 15, 1777.

"I have two reasons for troubling you with this letter. Since my last, looking accidentally, for another purpose, into 'Drake's Eboracum, or History of York,' I lit upon the old figure in stone, supposed to be designed for Wm. de Hatfield: it is at page 491, and at the preceding page is a description of it. He was called so from his being born at Hatfield, near Doncaster in Yorkshire, and not from Hatfield in Herts. It is probable you have the book, and may be aware of it; however, at all events, I would let you know it, and will transcribe the passages if you have it not.

"Reading this day the 'Monthly Review' of last month, there is a passage at page 323, which may, by an unobserving reader, be construed into an accusation of homicide against you. As it is possible you may not take that Review, or meet with it, I will transcribe the whole passage. It is a disquisition concerning the authenticity of 'Rowley's Poems.'

"'In 1770 Chatterton went to London, and carried all this treasure with him, in hopes, as we may very reasonably suppose, of disposing of it to his advantage; he accordingly applied, as I have been informed, to that learned antiquary,' [Observe the degradation

of familiarity.—W. C.] 'Mr. Horace Walpole, but met with little or no encouragement from him; soon after which, in a fit of despair, as it is supposed, he put an end to his unhappy life, having first cut to pieces and destroyed all the MSS. he had in his possession.'

"Some time ago Dr. Glynn, who is Rowley mad on the side of their authenticity, desired me to request of you, to tell me what were the poems he showed to you, whether originals or transcripts: this I should not however have troubled you with, had not this passage in the Review struck your most faithful and obliged servant, "Wm. Cole.

"Since I wrote my letter, Dr. Gooch, son to the late Bishop of Ely, drank tea here in his way to the Chapter at Ely. The old bishop, it seems, had been a great means to push on his present Lordship, with other friends, to the height he has attained. Dr. Gooch, though he has acted as his chaplain on various occasions, and never from him received any favour, on the vacancy of the Chancellorship last month, by the death of Dr. Peck at Norwich, thought he had some pretensions to a favour of this sort, as Dr. Ewin, to whom it had been promised, at the request and solicitation of Lord Hardwick; but, on the usurious affair breaking out, that promise was dissolved, with the approbation of Lord Hardwick. However, to most people's surprise, it was given to a man whose face his Lordship never saw; and looks like a design to insult Dr. Gooch, who, happily, is independent, and really wants it not. I mention this as a counterpart to a story you told me some two years ago."

Some idea of Mr. Cole's industry as a transcriber may be gathered from the following:

"You will be astonished at the rapidity of my pen, when you observe that this folio of four hundred pages, with above a hundred coats of arms and other silly ornaments, was completed in six weeks; for I was called off for above a week, to another MS., which I expected would be demanded of me every day, and which is part of another book now under hand and greatly advanced, being lists of persons and degrees, &c., but very useful to me. I

know I hazard little with your candour, philanthropy, and real philosophy in displaying my political opinions, derived to me from old Anthony Wood, Tom Hearne, &c., and which you know I very early embraced; but on no consideration would I trust the book with any one but yourself.

"What I have added to Mr. Baker's book, either in annotations or continuation, was done in an extreme hurry. The vacant coats I could have filled up chiefly, but I left them till I had seen a MS. in the College and another authority, which will ascertain them; and I expect them in a short time. If you discover any blunders, especially in the Latin, which I don't pretend to be well versed in, and in the few Greek words, which I know less of, I will take it as a favour to correct me; or in anything besides.

"I dined last week at the Palace of Ely, where I had not been these two years. His Lordship received me graciously; but not a word of a proposal I had made to him by a friend near three years ago, to accommodate me with an exchange with Burnham for a living in this neighbourhood; as the distance to Burnham makes it grievous to me, that I cannot without hazard of my life now and then reside at it. The Bishop repeated to me once or twice, that out of regard to your family, and father in particular, he had commissioned his son to buy your father's full-length picture by Vanloo, and sold among Lord Montfort's pictures by Christie. Mr. Keene bid as far as twenty-six guineas; but as he found Lord Hertford was determined to have it, he stopped there. I told the Bishop that I knew the late Lord Montfort gave sixty guineas to Vanloo for it."

"You and I differ radically in our principles," Walpole writes to Cole, on September 16, 1777, "and yet in forty years they have never cast a gloom over our friendship. We could give the world a reason that it would not like. We have both been sincere, have both been consistent, and neither adopted our principles nor have varied them for our

interest."* He writes again in the following month much to the same purpose, and, with a great deal of good feeling, adds, "I do not love disputation, even with those most indifferent to me. Your pardon I most sincerely beg for having contested a single point with you. I am sure it was not with a grain of ill humour towards you: on the contrary, it was from wishing at that moment that you did not approve, though I disliked—but even that I give up as unreasonable."†

Towards the conclusion of the following letter the writer describes one of those inexplicable acts by which both sexes, have been known to disgrace themselves, even while occupying a high position in society.

"Milton, October 30, 1777.

"My servant brought me your letter dated 15th, from Cambridge, only yesterday, together with the hateful book. I do not know whether I shall not talk Jacobite politics to you in my next, that I may have the pleasure of being confuted so politely and agreeably: at all times you write like no one else; when a little warm, you are charming. I thank you for your candid opinion of me in respect to my principles; they may be wrong, but was it worth while—I think you will do me the justice to believe that I am not one of the thirty pieces of silver gentry. You do me justice also, when you say that you trust we are in perfect good humour with one another. To convince you of it, the moment I received your last, I set about collecting my materials for Mr. Baker's life, and finished nineteen quarto pages in about two days. Not caring to consult my old sour neighbour at Landbeche, I wrote

* "Walpole Letters." Vol. v. p. 472. † Ibid. p. 483.

to Dr. Heberden, who knew him well and personally, who was so obliging to send me some account of his death. I sent his letter to my friend Dr. Pennington, an ingenious young physician of St. John's College, with many queries from their register; he wrote me a short answer, that I might expect a longer soon; but have not yet heard from him, though a fortnight has elapsed. I imagine the master, Dr. Chevallier, who is now going out of office as Vice-Chancellor, is pretty much taken up, and can't attend to my inquiries at present. To not a soul have I mentioned your name in this affair, nor has any one the least idea of it; I thought you might not care to have it talked of at present. When my notes arrive, you shall have them; but I would not defer writing and acknowledging the politeness of your last kind letter. Indeed you would wonder how I could amuse myself as I do with old registers; my time is taken up entirely with them, even so as to grudge myself my time for meals. The reason for this hurry and intemperance in writing is that the present Master of Emanuel has been so kind to lend me several MS. volumes of his predecessor's collecting, most of them catalogues and lists of Cambridge graduates: his son, Dr. Richardson, many years chaplain to Sir Jos. Yorke at the Hague, married last year, and has called for the MSS. to town, where he resides; but I have reason to believe that what cost his father most of his life will be made waste paper of. I have, three months ago, by the advice of Dr. Farmer, wrote for leave to retain three or four, but have not had the common civility of an answer, but have kept writing; and am now got to the last volume, containing 702 pages of lists of Bachelors of Arts. I was very loth so much good industry should perish, so labour like a horse to get through these MSS. before a summons to return them. The worst of the story is to come. Two days after Dr. Farmer lent me these treasures, he and some company dined with me. The books were all on a table in my study, and in the afternoon two or three of the company went out of the parlour to the study to look at it, having not been here before. I did not attend them by reason of my gout; but next morning I missed an octavo volume; and after hunting in every corner and among my books, which have been all

removed on purpose, I can find nothing of it. I am pretty clear who took it; and indeed I have wrote to him to know if, among other books he has occasionally lent me, I did not return that, by mistake, with them. The master is too honourable to take such a step, so I cannot be far from the person; but the book is irrecoverably gone; and what to say or do I know not. I mean to return them all in the lump, and hope it will not be missed; though in the first parcel sent to me, in which is included the MS. in question, I wrote a list myself and sent it to Dr. Farmer; I hope he will not recur to it—if he does, I am undone."

The following opinion of Walpole's antiquarian pretensions had been put forth, more seriously, by less friendly censors, greatly, as we have shewn, to the indignation of Mr. Cole. He does not state, however, what were the claims of the *true, genuine* antiquary.

"I am sorry Simon FitzSimon and William of Worcester are so low in your estimation. I suppose I may, without fear of being saucy, pronounce upon you, as I did on their editor, 'that you are no true, genuine antiquary.' You are better, and have availed yourself of it.

"The liberal bill which lately passed to take away all sanguinary and penal laws from the Papists, really gives me joy, and I accept your gratulation; but I must needs say, I don't like the quarter it comes from. It puts me in mind of the unnatural junction of the Presbyterians and them, in King James II.'s time, against the Church of England. Indeed I never expected such a favour from patriotism. Even that won't reconcile me to their tricks: I know a little of them, which makes me dread even their favours.

"Whenever you are pleased to send your commission for transcripts out of Benet College Library, I will endeavour to get them executed. The poor Master, my most particular friend, is now dying. The last visit I paid at Cambridge, seven weeks ago, was to him: I had then no notion of his living a week. Had he been

well, I had free liberty, had I been in a condition, to have had any books to his lodge, for they must not go out of college; and would have transcribed them for you. My situation at present won't let me imagine it; yet I have friends there sufficient to get it done for you.

"I wish with you, as Lord Chatham is to have a public funeral, that his bones may lie at St. Paul's: such a beginning would put it in fashion, and ornament the bare walls, that want covering. I hope the Livery will seize Wilkes's body also in due time. Altars to two such patriotic worthies as these will bring the Lord Mayor and Aldermen to that church, which they seem to have neglected of late.

"I will inquire after the new edition of 'Biographia.' I hope nothing, or nothing to the purpose, will be found therein, that I may not be frustrated of a Life of Mr. Baker by the hand of a master.

"I was told t'other day that Mr. Terwhit, who published an edition of Chaucer, and who was originally an advocate for the authenticity of Rowley, but is now convinced of the forgery of Chatterton, is going to print an account of that matter."

Mr. Cole begs hard to be permitted to retain his own opinions; and further, he is desirous that his friend should write the life of Baker from materials in his possession.

"As to politics, I never will say one word more about them on any occasion. My principles, as you may remember, were imbibed very early: I never saw occasion to alter them: and what is more, I have all my life lived and acted with the Whigs, who were my friends, though perhaps I might not always wish them success; yet in no part of my life [have I] ever caballed with the contrary party, with whom to this day, I have little or no connection. I never solicited Whig or Tory to get preferment: and the only time I ever asked for a favour of that Government, is this very post, when for the first time in my life, I solicit a living. My reasons are, I am tired of not being able to reside at Burnham, which I wish to resign: yet I

can't with prudence do it without getting another: and as our bishop has these seven years made a mention himself, by saying to others, before I had Burnham, that he wished to serve me, I have taken the resolution to put him in mind of what he has said of that sort to Lord Montfort, Mr. Stevenson, &c. But this has carried me the Lord knows whither. I meant to say, that as I had been so disinterested all my days, and kept my politics to myself and my books, I was in hopes I should have passed through life, as easy as such outside moderation would promise me. We never were serious till Mr. Baker's History disclosed my politics. I was in hopes you would have indulged an old friend in his whims, and have as easily passed over the foibles of my age as you used agreeably to rally my early prejudices in college. I don't forget, that you laughingly used to say, that I used to pinch old Mother Oliver, the fruit woman, for her being a Presbyterian. Thus much and no more for ever, for politics. Before I conclude for ever, I will do you the justice to say, that you are a most fair antagonist, and make more concessions than I really expected from one of your side.

"Come we now to a much more agreeable argument.

"You say you mean not to print any more, but that you will let me see what you have said of Chatterton: I must see it here or nowhere: for I am afraid I never shall go far from hence again. Your writings give me pleasure always, even though against my will; and if you say the word, not a soul shall see a letter of it. But this is as you judge proper. What concerns me more is the inference I draw from your distaste to be any further an author. I wish it has not an evil aspect to Mr. Baker's life. I have all my materials together that I mean to search after; and if this is meant as an order not to send them, though it mortifies me extremely, yet I am a passive obedience man, and submit to the decision of my superiors. You forbid me to say anything on your last paragraph: it is very hard to have one's mouth closed, when I could contradict every word of it, nor do I believe a single syllable of it. What is it to me, whether I am pleased and enraptured by parts or spirits! The world will be satisfied, so that they are amused, and never enter into those nice distinctions and refinements to know how it

comes to pass that your writings please them more than any one's else. I am afraid almost to tell you my surmises on this subject. Since you have seen my vehemence in some particulars, and may guess that the materials I shall furnish you with to compose this life may be in the same style, you are unwilling to undertake a task which you have a right to finish in your own way, and which I am sure will be a right one, and care not to run counter to what you judge will not be pleasant to me. I assure you I shall be thoroughly satisfied to do it in what way you please. I defy you not to make even so dry a subject palatable to every one's taste. But I entreat you to use your own pleasure herein, and if you are really set against it, I freely, though reluctantly give up your promise. I have seen, for two or three hours, the new 'Biographia;' the life there, I am satisfied will not interfere with anything that may be said in another work. I have selected out of that life the only passage that I had not before, and which is new, but unfortunately a falsehood: viz., that Mr. Prior allowed Mr. Baker the profits of his fellowship during his life. Now it is well known, Mr. Prior, though a plenipotentiary, yet was a beggar, and had it not in his power to be so generous. I have drawn up a paper to prove it. I wish you would send for that and its fellows, and not leave them in my hands, who will make sorry work of them. There is one thing in the 'Biographia Nova' that will oblige you to send for it, and then you may judge of Mr. B.'s article; it is at p. 203, where is a note of the independent Dr. Kippis, very impertinent in respect to your father and yourself. In his new Preface, he says he is impartial, neither Whig nor Tory, &c., &c., but is a friend to the liberties of mankind. It provokes me to see these constant insinuations from these sort of people (who, I will venture to say and prove, are, when in power, the most arbitrary and tyrannical,) in complimenting one another at the expense of their opposites."

The following instance of clerical obsequiousness fully deserves the exposure the writer has given it.

"Since I wrote last, I have given a cursory view to the new articles in the 'New Biographia,' and find your name mentioned

in two other places slightly. The one is at p. 62, in Mr. Addison's life, where the editor has added, in a note, that 'Mr. Walpole's censure of Mr. Addison's character of Lord Somers is by no means to be justified.'

"The other is at p. 5, in Abbot's life, where Dr. Kippis observes, that Archbishop Abbot was as great a flatterer of King James as any other Court chaplain; and gives an instance of such gross and fulsome flattery as one could scarcely believe. The passage is this, in a preface by Abbot, before a pamphlet intituled 'The Examinations, Arraignment, and Conviction of George Sprot, &c., 1608,' where, speaking of King James, Abbot says thus—'Whose life hath been so immaculate and unspotted in the world, so free from all touch of viciousness and staining imputation, that even malice itself, which leaveth nothing unsearched, could never find true blemish in it, nor cast probable aspersion on it. Zealous as David; learned and wise, the Solomon of our age; religious as Josias; careful of spreading Christ's faith as Constantine the Great; just as Moses; undefiled in all his ways as a Jehoshaphat or Hezekias; full of clemency as another Theodosius.' The editor then adds 'If Mr. Walpole had seen this passage, he certainly would not have said, "Honest Abbot could not flatter."'

"When these hypercritics thus make it their business to pick holes in other people's works, how careful ought they not to be to let anything slip from their pens of the same kind? Yet I think the blunder in relation to Mr. Prior, which they might easily have known, and I think they cite 'Swift's Letters,' from whence I recollected the circumstance, shows that they are not infallible; and that if a person was to make it his business to sit down and examine their own new articles, an abundant crop of things to be found fault with might be met there. In half a day's perusal, I made a few memoranda of the sort.

"I hope, for the future, all admirers of Abbot will forget the blasphemous exclamation, as it has been called, of Whitgift, at the Hampton Court Conference, or at least acknowledge that the puritans were as apt scholars in Court idolatry as the clergy, who had more exalted notions of Church matters."

Mr. Cole, for Walpole's sake, took more than a friendly interest in the Chatterton dispute, and was one of the first who questioned the authenticity of the Bristol manuscripts.

I long to see your account of Chatterton. The day which brought your favour, I received one from Mr. Lort: this passage was in it:—

"'Our President has been at Bristol to procure proofs to support the authenticity of Rowley's Poems; but I believe he had not seen Mr. Tyrwhit's Appendix when he left London. It was rumoured that he had fallen down the stairs of the Tower in Redcliffe Church, and hurt his other leg: but I hope this will prove a joke only. Dr. Glynne has busied himself much in the same pursuit; when I called on him in London, he refused to open his lips to me on the subject, assigning as a reason, what I will venture to say is a very false one, that I had treated him in the same manner at Cambridge.'

"By this you will perceive, that people are as alert about it, as if it was a new discovery, and that it was a certainty. Dr. Glynne is a perfect enthusiast on the subject; and Mr. Lort not far from it. I did not know before that Dr. Miller was lame: however that may be, it is but a dull joke to take advantage of sneering at that which he can't help.

"I hope I did not say in my last that the biographers had abused your father and you: the most they can be taxed with is impertinence to both. I sent yesterday to Cambridge for the volume, and this is the transcript, at page 203, and at the conclusion of the life of Arthur, Earl of Anglesey:—

"'The ingenious Mr. Walpole, in his usual lively manner, hath made several remarks on the character of Lord Anglesey, and upon the account of him in the preceding article, which merit attention. [Cat. of Roy. and Nob. Auth. Vol. ii. p. 65, 77.] We agree with Mr. Walpole, that it is not probable that the Earl of Anglesey should decline being Prime Minister to avoid envy.

Indeed, it is not at all likely that any such offer should have been made to him at or a little after the Restoration; since no person could at that time stand in competition, in this respect, with Lord Clarendon. We farther agree with Mr. Walpole, that the Earl of Anglesey sitting in judgment upon the Regicides, is not so honourable to him as hath been represented, though he had certainly no concern in the King's death; and that his being employed for twenty-two years by King Charles II. is but an insufficient proof of his not having been a bad man. It is certainly an improbable supposition, as Mr. Walpole justly remarks, that the Earl should have been thought of for Lord Chancellor by King James II., when he had a Chancellor so moulded to his purposes as Jefferies. If the fact were true, instead of being an honour to Lord Anglesey, it would reflect the greatest disgrace on his character.

"'It is from the preceding account of the Earl of Anglesey in particular, that Mr. Walpole hath taken occasion to make a severe stricture on our work, by saying, that notwithstanding its singular merit, he cannot help calling it, Vindicatio Britannica, or A Defence of every Body. But in answer to this remark, it may be observed, 1st. That the censure, so far as it is just, can only be applied to a few articles. 2ndly. That in an undertaking of this kind, which is not intended to be the vehicle of scandal, or of petulant criticism, but to do justice to ability and merit, of whatever religious or political principle, party and profession, it is safest to err on the candid side. 3rdly. That the removal of particular charges, which have been hastily or groundlessly brought against eminent men, falls, with peculiar propriety, within the compass of our design. And, 4thly. That if we have been guilty of an excess of gentleness, we must guard, for the future, against this amiable error. It will behove us, for instance, when we come to the Life of Sir Robert Walpole, to take care that we be not too milky. However, we hope it will be the glory of this work to treat every character with all the candour which is consistent with truth. K.'

"This is the passage. I think this Mr. Impartial has run counter to his safety of erring on the candid side, when he renews Dr. Jortin's illiberal attack on Mr. Baker, even though the former biographers had censured Jortin for it. This proves my reason to be good (in regard to my own opinions), why I would not be concerned in lending materials to such colourers, whose classical historians are Baxter, Calamy, Neal, &c., with eternal fightings against the prejudices of Sir Anthony Wood, mostly taken from Calamy."

Mr. Cole, after expressing his satisfaction at his friend's undertaking the life of Baker, remarks on the Chatterton forgeries in the following terms.

"I never pretend to more than I know; poetry and criticism are as much out of my element as to dissert about the excellencies of Demosthenes or the divinity of Plato; yet, dabbling into Rowley's Poems, when they first appeared, I had no opinion of their genuineness. I always objected to Dr. Glynn and Mr. Lort, the enthusiasts in their favour—the name of Sir Charles Baldwin, the Christian name, Charles, was rarely in use in England till the Stuarts put it in fashion; and though Sir Charles Brandon and a very small number of instances to the contrary, probably from Charles V., may be met with among us, yet they are so few, that that alone staggered my faith about them; besides the utter improbability of such a poet as Rowley, coeval with Lidgate and Gower, being unnoticed and unheard-of, insomuch that we are yet to learn whether he was a regular or secular priest. In 'William of Worcester,' lately printed, a native of Bristol, as well as Rowley, one who talks so much of Canning and the City of Bristol, can we suppose that he would not have mentioned a poet who would have added such lustre to the place of his nativity, had such a person existed in reality? I desired Dr. Glynn, and mentioned it to Lort, both of whom I think have made two journeys to Bristol on this sole occasion two years ago, that since they spared no pains or trouble about it, to search Bishop Carpenter, of Worcester, his

register, or the registers there, in order to find his name entered, which it would probably be, although a regular, and certainly if a secular and benfieced in the diocese. I know not whether they followed my direction."

Mr. Cole, it appears, shared his friend's prejudices. What follows is a striking instance of this.

"Lord Hardwick showed his judgment in endeavouring to connect himself with you and your press: a person who so soon discovered the forgeries of Chatterton, was not likely to be caught by the cunning of the other. Though so humble as my station is, yet I never could bring myself to pay the usual homage in fashion here, to go and dine at Wimpole: the natural and inherent meanness of the whole race has ever disgusted me, and though I have no reason to think I should be worse received than any one else, yet there is something so very forbidding in the manner of his Lordship, that I could never persuade myself to pay court to a person whom I could not honour.

"I am quite sorry for Mr. Scott's assurance, for I suppose he is in possession of the MS. he mentions; and though your delicacy might not choose to be concerned in the publication, yet I shall be heartily glad to be a subscriber; your specimen has given me a relish to his, Lord Herbert's, manner, and his description of the Court of France must be curious and entertaining; I could wish your Chattertons and Scotts would make their essays on less discerning persons, and that the public might not suffer by such mystifying discouragements.

"That Mr. Baker was generally supposed to have thoughts of writing a history of the Cambridge writers, is evident from some quotations in my former papers on his subject. Mr. Drake, in his 'Eboracum,' p, 378, speaking of one Mr. Cartwright, has this,—'The account of this man is taken wholly from Sir Thomas Widdrington; for, as the learned world is not yet made happy with a history of the Cambridge writers, though it is much expected from the labours of that great antiquary, Mr. Baker, of St. John's, I

am not able to give any further intelligence concerning Mr. Cartwright's life and writings."

"In a curious pedigree of 'Peverel and Peche,' Barons of Brunne, in Cambridgeshire, lately put into my hands, I find John Walpole, who lived about the time of Edward II., as well as I can guess, married Elizabeth, the daughter of Gilbert de Peche by Isolda his wife, which Elizabeth was great great granddaughter to Sir Hamon de Peche, who married Alicia, the daughter and heir of Pagan Peverel, temp. Henry I., and founder of Barnwell Abbey, near Cambridge. I see there are more Johns than one in your pedigree, and about the time mentioned, but their matches are different; perhaps this lady might have been a first or second wife."

The first paragraph of the following refers to the statement Walpole afterwards published of the destruction of his father's will by George II., and the compromise the King made with Lord Chesterfield, who had married the King's natural daughter by the Duchess of Kendal.

"In our paper, the accusation of your father is as you mention; but it puts the will into the hands of the Lord Almoner, Archbishop of York, and the sum recovered by Lord Chesterfield, 80,000*l*. But lies are much easier come at than truth; and when they are to aid scandal and defamation are readily swallowed with appetite. I hope you, who are so well able, will leave an antidote to such poisoners of true history. If I am not mistaken, Mrs. Macaulay has been as guilty of abusing your father's memory as any one. I am entirely of your opinion, that the character of Lord Orford will appear with greater lustre when opposed to the mock-patriots who have succeeded him; and as no one can do it so well, as no one is more interested to see justice done him—which I am satisfied you have it in your power to do—I make no doubt but your filial piety to so great and excellent a man, and so worthy a parent, will force you to do it.

"In the last 'London Magazine,' p. 420, which, as I suppose, you do not take, is this paragraph relating to Chatterton, whose life is the subject of the paper:—

"'One of his first efforts to emerge from a situation so irksome to him, was an application to a gentleman well known in the republic of letters, which, unfortunately for the public and himself, met with a very cold reception, and which the disappointed author always spoke of with a high degree of acrimony whenever it was mentioned to him.'

"You see this is civil to what has been said. Your narrative would undeceive the world, who are fated to be fed with falsehood."

Mr. Cole, in the following sentences, refers to a rumour then in circulation, that the fine gallery of pictures that had been collected at Houghton Hall by Sir Robert Walpole, was about to be sold to the Empress of Russia.

"Dear Sir, Milton, July 24, 1779.

"I hope the pictures will keep their station, on many accounts. It is a fine repository for them, and, though a most capital palace, yet, when the pictures have unfurnished it, it will be disregarded, at least for a time, and till they are forgotten. I am told by a Norfolk gentleman, who has it from Lord O., that the reason he gives for parting with them is the burthen upon him of paying the interest of 40,000*l.*, which this would ease him from. Yet, methinks the honour of his family, the way he lives in, no children to provide for, and the great fortune that must come in, on the death of his mother, might be supposed to balance the weight of the interest, except he is more pressed than I apprehend he is. I am rather partial to him, having met him two or three times at Horsheth, when his agreeable and polite behaviour much pleased me.

"The glass-painter at Cambridge is one Charles Freeman, a common coach- and house-painter. He has an elder brother at Cambridge, self-taught also, and, from his appearance, the least likely to prove a genius that you can meet with. They are both

originals, well-behaved and ingenious. The elder brother is a most admirable copier, and did a great deal in that way; but he got his prices to be high. He now is so employed in surveying estates, that he has in a manner dropped his pencil. I wish you could see a coat of arms that he did lately for Tyson and his wife. He brought it over to me by great persuasion; for he is shy, diffident, and reserved to a great degree.

"Mr. Bryant was at Cambridge for five days in the commencement week, where he has not been for years. He was so caressed, that dining here was impracticable, when heads and professors vied with each other to engage him; and I thought he much distinguished me by coming to see me two mornings together. Dr. Glynn came with him both times; and though he said not a word to me, yet I find, by others, that he can't digest or relish your Chatterton book. He is, indeed, Rowley mad. Mr. Bryant seemed much pleased with a kind letter he had received from you. He told me, that the Mastership of the Charter-house, without any application from him, had been offered to him, but that he had declined it. I was much surprised at it, as it was a most honourable retreat and retirement in the decline of life, and in the literary way. I told him so."

Mr. Cole never missed an opportunity of recounting the few "hair-breadth 'scapes" his uneventful life produced. The following adventure appears to have startled him.

"The Master of Emmanuel, my very good friend—just recovered himself from Death's door, as is said commonly—invited me to dine with him on Monday. As I was very well, I went with pleasure to see him, meaning to come away when the moon was risen; but he much pressing me to stay and play a game at whist, and eat a piece of brawn only for supper, I was tempted to do so; though utterly against my practice, never tasting anything after tea for these twenty years, and staying supper at Cambridge but once, and that at Dr. Lort's chambers seven years ago, for these twelve years. I staid till 11; and Mr. Masters, my neighbour, being there also, we

got into our separate carriages at the college-gate. It seems his driver was drunk; for, about a mile on this side my house, I observed my driver turn about twice or three times, to look behind him, and then jump down and run to the assistance of Mr. Masters, who was making a horrible outcry, as his servant was under his horses' feet, and the horses trampling upon him. The instant my horses found themselves at liberty, with the reins on their backs, they set out a full gallop, and so continued till they passed through the turnpike in my village, which the gate-keeper had unluckily set wide open, not to interrupt me, on hearing the rattle of the wheels on the earth, though it then began to thaw and was dripping rain. All this while I was seated at the bottom of the chaise, with my legs out of it, and resting on the foot-board, with an intention to have jumped out, as occasion might offer; but observing the swiftness of the hinder wheels, was afraid of my gown's being entangled in it, and so might be dragged along after the carriage. I had let down all the glasses at first, and in doing so, some way or other, had dropt my hat. This added to my fright; for always keeping myself so immoderately warm, and hardly ever stirring out, I concluded, if I escaped being dashed to pieces, I should certainly catch a bad cold and fever, being exposed so late to the wind and weather and rain, and without any hat. Providence, however, was more propitious to me than are my deserts; for the horses being used to a good smooth road, gallopped on, without any ill accident, the whole mile, and cleared the turnpike, where the keeper standing, and seeing no driver, he ran at full stretch and stopped the horses, and saved my life; for had they gone a furlong farther, to the short turn out of the road, to the lane leading to my house, where were two small road bridges and ugly ditches on each side, all had been over. Thank God, I got to bed in five minutes; and my servant, frightened to death, soon after came in also. Mr. Masters was forced to walk home three miles—discharged his servant at the turnpike—his harness broke to pieces, and his shafts to his chaise left on the road. That he was horribly frightened is evident from a civil letter—very uncommon with him—next morning; and yesterday he came to see me, and gave my servant five shillings

and many kind expressions. I could get no rest that night, as you may well imagine, my spirits being too much in a hurry to allow it; and though I was a little feverish next day, probably from want of rest, I had so good a sleep for the whole night on Tuesday, that on Wednesday—yesterday—I was as well as ever. Pray excuse the overflowings of my heart in gratitude for this deliverance and escape. The week before, Masters had alarmed me in another way, leaving a scrap of a dirty old cover at the turnpike, to be brought to me by any one to be picked up, with only these words on it,—he is deputy to the Chancellor of the diocese,—'The bishop informs Mr. Masters that Dr. Apthorp of Eton is dead.'

"It came in a little before some company came in to dine with me, and damped my spirits extremely. I went to Cambridge next day, and could find no reason for the intelligence, which was premature, for it came on 16th December, and I have heard nothing to confirm it.

"The count-bishop formerly was my intimate acquaintance: it was when he had a mind to marry the present Lady Irwin, and was often backwards and forwards with me at Horseth. I have never seen him since. He'll hardly stay in Ireland, with an estate of 12,000*l.* per annum in England. Hubert de Burgh was Lord Chief Justice of England and Earl of Kent, but no bishop: probably you confound him with Odo, Bishop of Bayeux and Earl of Kent, half-brother to the Conqueror. Anthony de Bec, Bishop of Durham, was Patriarch of Jerusalem and Lord of the Isle of Man, but never Earl of Kent. Walcher, Bishop of Durham, in the Conqueror's time, was Earl of Northumberland; and his successor, Hugh de Pusey, nephew to King Stephen, was Earl of Northumberland also. If Archbishop Drummond had survived his brother, he would have been Earl of Kinnoul. I have not seen the new 'History of Gloucestershire,' but your character of it will make me contrive to get it somewhere; but as for old women's stories and vulgar traditions, commend me to Mr. Grose's 'Antiquities of England and Wales,' which I had never seen to any purpose till within this month. It is a mere picture-book. I have not yet seen the 'Alien Priories:' Mr. Nichols, the ostensible author of it, is the printer, partner to

the late Mr. Bowyer, and who has had many articles lately in the 'Gentleman's Magazine,' particularly respecting St. John's College and its fellows.

"I hope and wish that the news we had in all our papers that the Houghton collection of pictures are at the bottom of the sea is false. Good God! what a destruction! I am shocked when I think of it."

The fate of the Houghton Gallery was a subject of deep regret to Mr. Cole and all other staunch Walpolites. Every rumour he hears respecting it he transmitted to his friend at Strawberry Hill.

"I had a letter last post from Mr. Pennant, from whom I had not heard for a great while; he sends me a proof print of his own portrait, which, he says, is to be sold, with some etchings by his servant Moses Griffith, well executed. His 'Journey to London' is going also to be published, with a new edition of his 'Quadrupeds' in quarto next month, greatly enlarged by the discoveries and additions from Russia.

"This put me in mind (and what I ought not to remind you of) the Houghton Collection. By Mr. Kerrish, a Norfolk man and of the neighbourhood, who was here a few days ago, I hear that Lord O. has received the Czarina's portrait, and under it he has caused a description to be written, importing, that your father, Prime Minister to two kings and for so many years, had so little enriched himself, that his grandson was forced to sell his collection of pictures to pay his debts. Perhaps you have heard this before.

"I am now deeply engaged in transcribing an old chartulary of an abbey in Derbyshire, which lately fell into my hands; and from the same person I received a MS. fairly written, called 'The Negotiations of Cardinal Wolsey.' Some of the letters may have been printed, but not all; so I am tempted to begin it, though it will be a long work.

"A gentleman has called on me since I wrote this, and tells me that Mr. Walpole at Lisbon writes word, that Admiral Rodney

has taken six of the Spanish ships out of eight, and one blown up. I wish you would confirm it."

After indulging in raptures upon some remarks Walpole had written on receiving from him a present of his portrait, Mr. Cole adds—

"I am sorry the 'History of Leicester' turns out so bad, and much more so that you condemn so positively a class of reading as the worst of the sort. Local histories, I own, please me much: it has been the great object of my life—to hear so severe a censure upon them, and from you, whose judgment in most things is with me infallible, mortifies me not a little.

"Dr. Ewin called on me a few days before he went to London. I said not one word, and never mentioned your name to him, nay, avoided sending the picture by him, knowing his forwardness to press himself into all sorts of company, sometimes improperly. Dr. Lort wrote to me that he called upon him at Lambeth. If he had common sense or modesty he must know that his visit there could not be agreeable. I don't know that I ever mentioned his affair to you. He told me on Saturday was se'nnight (I think), that he expected, notwithstanding all possible efforts, that he should be struck out of the Commission both for town and county; if he is, God knows what will become of him, for he has no taste for reading, or sporting, or exercise, but makes an excellent justice, and very useful, and I think will be much missed in that walk. He is now going forthwith to build a picture gallery, under Mr. Essex's direction, of 50 feet long and 16 broad and 14 high;—he has plenty of pictures to furnish it with, which no one ever sees, and a great deal of painted glass.

"I told you I would send you a curious double mistake of Dr. Kippis. On the last day of February, the Masters of Benet and Emmanuel calling in here on their ride, seeing the 'Biographia' on the table, on my mentioning something about Bishop Bull, they turned to look at it, and fell upon Eustace Budgell, p. 693, where seeing the epitaph and epigram (which stood glaringly in view)

produced by Dr. K. as specimens of the fine taste and poetical abilities of Mr. Budgell, Dr. Farmer read them aloud. After a moment's pausing, he said that the epitaph, he was sure, was the two last lines of that made on Queen Elizabeth, and is on her tomb in Westminster Abbey, recorded by Camden in his 'Remains.' This was confoundedly unlucky;—but what was more so, Dr. Colman answered, That the distich or epigram on the bad dancers to good music was by Mr. George Jeffries of Trinity College, and published in some miscellaneous poetry which he had by him. I have not the books; but if it should prove true, could any thing be more unfortunate? The two distics I will transcribe, as you may have returned the volume.

'ON A FINE LADY—EPITAPH.

'She was, she is, (what can there more be said?)
On Earth the first, in Heaven the second Maid.'

'But ill the motion with the music suits.
So Orpheus fiddled, and so danced the Brutes.'

"Have you seen a book dedicated to you called 'Modern Anecdotes of the antient Family of the Kinkvervankotsdarspraken-gotehderns: a Tale for Christmas.' 1779. Small 8vo. 2s. printed by Davenhill? It is mentioned in the last 'Critical Review,' p. 122, which is all that I know of it. The reviewers have no remarks relating to you."

It will be seen from the following how much alarmed Mr. Cole was with the disturbed aspect of the times.

"On Saturday we had a tumult at Cambridge about petitioning, brought forward by an Anabaptist alderman, for the sheriff would not call the county together. It consisted wholly, I may say, of dissenters of all hues and complexions. They were patronized by the Duke of Rutland, (who had a design to recommend his brother, Lord Robert Manners, to be one of the members for the county), the Duke of Manchester, who told the populace that they were the origin of power and law; and that from them alone, he and others

in his station, now become so corrupt, must expect protection. Lord Duncannon was in the chair, and read the petition, which Mr. Crisp Molineux of Lynn, having a better voice, repeated. John Wilkes made several harangues, as did a Mr. Daye, who has been much in way of it in Essex. These were attended by Dr. Watson, Regius Professor of Divinity and Archdeacon of Ely, in a lay habit, who spoke not himself, but often prompted them. The two county members, Sir John Cotton and Sir Sampson Gideon, were there *ex officio*, and said all that could be said against it; but the popular dissenting tide was so strong that nothing could stem it. They had adjourned from the town-hall, which was too small for the purpose of having the mob introduced, to the senate-house yard, where the steps and colonnade made a good stage for the actors. They have appointed a committee; and I heard a very extraordinary personage of the clergy is one of it. Not a gentleman of the country appeared there to give it any countenance; yet this will be produced as the voice of the county. We live in sad times. I declare sincerely, fearing the ill tendency of all this mischief brewing, that I hope I shall be out of the way before it is accomplished.

"I am wholly of your mind in respect to Roman antiquities among us; but I always thought my little taste for them proceeded from an ignorance of them and their paraphernalia. I am better pleased now about it."

There was a curious contrast in the constitutions of Cole and his friend which the former has thus chronicled. Further on he is eloquent upon the "Wilkes and Liberty" fever which then affected the nation.

"The contrast of our two constitutions amazes me every time I think of it. You was bred up delicately in cotton, when coarse wool was my lot; yet have I seen you in the dews and damps of November, in slippers, without hat or other clothing than within doors, walking your garden at Strawberry-hill: the sitting with your back against an open window, in an east wind last year, in

the evening, for hours, would absolutely have killed me: your never using a great coat is to me astonishing. I am told I keep myself too warm: it may be so; but I know not how to avoid it: if I leave off a handkerchief less than usual, a sore throat is the immediate consequence. All this fine weather, with the finest blow of snow-drops, hypaticas and crocuses I ever had, I have, though in general tolerable well, not dared to go into the garden to look at them, nor have been at the farther end of it these six weeks.

"I shall think the better of my own, the nearer they draw to your politics: but I am free to own, that if the present system of committees and associations go on, I dread the consequences and wish to be out of the way of them. How much is your wise father's peaceable plan to be preferred! He knew the turbulence of the nation, and had no small plague to keep them quiet. No king nor government can long please a people given up to changes of all sorts. If an angel was sent to be vice-roy, they would chop off his wings. A boisterous, blustering king is a savage and despotic tyrant; a learned, peaceful king, a pedant; a virtuous one shall be accused by Mrs. Macaulay for being uxorious and loving his wife too well; a profligate one shall be abused for the very reverse. But I will stop, and wish men would return to their senses, and be as moderate and temperate as you are. Good God! that annual parliaments should be ever thought of! They would not probably be so much prized; but the drunken scene would never be laid asleep. But we live in an age of projects; I wish they were good ones. I may speak my mind the more freely, as I never was benefitted by any government, and never asked favour or preferment from any: all my ambition was to see things pass quietly and regularly; but to be governed by a mob, and under the pretence of 'Wilkes and Liberty' to be enslaved to the vilest and lowest of despotism, is galling to a degree."

The following contains some remarks upon Mr. Cole's literary acquaintance.

"Poor Mr. Tyson was carried off by a violent fever after a week's illness. I am sorry he had left off visiting you; however

that may be, I am morally certain he had the sincerest regard for you; and though he had his oddities, yet he was a most valuable and ingenious friend; I have regretted no one so much since the loss of Mr. Gray.

"I well remember Mr. George Montagu; was acquainted with him a little, and either called upon him in Craven or Norfolk Street, or found him at the present Lord Dacre's, for I shall scarce ever forget one of his vivacities at that time. When Mr. Gray was with me at Blecheley for a week or fortnight, he left me to go to him in Northanptonshire; I think he met you at Horton when I accompanied you to Burleigh.

"It is not a nephew, but a son of Cooke the Provost of King's who being a sycophant from assistant at Eton, continues his trade now in a more elevated station. Bishop Keene collated him last week to a prebend in his church at Ely. His son had dedicated, about two months before, a sermon on Religious and Moral Liberty to his lordship; this was rewarded by a stall to the father. The sermon you allude to is the second part of the same tune, being on Civil Liberty. They were both preached at St. Mary's extempore, very unusual there, and are the most bombast, pedantical, obscure sermons I ever read, and were much ridiculed at the time of preaching them; and no bad copy of verses against the former appeared in the Cambridge paper, in which he had aimed to throw some discredit on Sir Isaac Newton and his philosophy, than which nothing could be more unpopular, he being the idol of the place. The last is vehement against Dr. Watson, the patriot Divinity Professor. Now I mention Dr. Cooke, you will probably be pleased with the following anecdote relating to him. The master of Benet College has an acquaintance in Dorsetshire, a Mr. Hall, who is mentioned by Kippis, in the Preface to his second volume, as one of his assistants. This gentleman, in a letter which the master left with me to transcribe, has the following long passage, which I shall transcribe, and which I make no doubt refers to Cooke, as the picture is the very likeness of the preaching son, and was very like the father, when we were at Schole, as you may recollect. The passage is this,—

"'I have been this week most delightfully engaged in perusing some original letters and MSS. of the late Mr. Joseph Spence, Mr. C. Pitt, Dr. Cobden, and others. I have really felt myself as free and intimate with them, as their friends could ever be to them when living, &c.

"'As Mr. Spence's letters are before me, I will transcribe you an anecdote from one of his letters to Mr. C. Pitt, which may be new to you and your Cambridge friends.

"'"I am glad some of the school-masters of your acquaintance are pleased with the grave animal at the end of the seventeenth Dialogue. There are others who have been angry at it, though it could not be meant for any man of good sense, and is, indeed, the representative only of one real blockhead; a gowned ass, who, when I offered him some of my receipts, from an old acquaintance with him, said, 'that he could have nothing to do with them, because the book and subject was such as could not be of any use to him in his way.' He was master in one of the greatest schools, and had I dedicated my plates, that print should have been consecrated to his name, as it is, it may as well be concealed. What I like most in it, is that simple wisdom in the air of the face, which does not at all disagree with the gentleman who sat for it."

"'I should be glad to know the name of this curious schoolmaster, and to hear from you very soon.' That it was meant for Cooke there can be no doubt, both from the likeness of the figure to him, and the subject of that chapter being on* and a criticism on the Eton method of teaching boys to make Latin verses and get verses of Homer and Virgil, even when they have no taste for them. I speak experimentally, having been frequently flogged, at this pimping fellow's instigation, for what, I conceive, was no fault of my industry, but want of a poetical genius. Now, to speak the truth, the case to me seems to be this, Mr. Spence, a refined and lively coxcomb, offered to get off some of his copies to this formal, solemn, insolent, and proud coxcomb, who refused to oblige him. The elegant writer knew no better way to revenge himself than to make the pedant ridiculous among a

* A portion of MS. is torn away.

few friends, for it would not have been decorous to have spoken out. The excuse that Cooke made for his refusal was, no doubt, extremely absurd, as the book was a treatise on Heathen Mythology, Language, and Grammar, the only things, I suppose, that Cooke knows much about, and, as a school-master, was the most useful book he could have subscribed for.

"In the last month's 'Gentleman's Magazine,' p. 196, you will find Frederic, Prince of Wales, admitted by you as a royal author, for a *chanson à boire*, by him there printed; and, at p. 179 is an account of a curious picture in King James the First's time, of a procession to St. Paul's, by one John Gipkyn.

"It is incredible the riot, expense, and drunkenness going forward all over this country, beyond belief, and what was ever practised before."

After filling a couple of pages in describing an attempt to hatch poultry, Mr. Cole adds:—

"Yesterday I was all day in the severest trial of electioneering I ever saw. Such multitudes, such riots, drunkenness, bearishness, and heat, I never wish to experience and meet with again. Sir Harry Peyton nominated the Duke of Rutland's brother, whom they call here Lord Robert Manners. Sir Sampson Gideon was nominated by Sir Charles Gould; and who produced the son of the late Mr. Charles Yorke, I don't know, for I dared not venture into the air of the Castle Hill, but was in a house in the Castle Yard. Mr. Thomas Townshend senior, long served for the University: the present members are Messrs. Croftes and Manfield. Poor Mr. Soame Jenyns was near being trampled to death by the mob: his face was much bruised. He is not made for mixing with a riotous mob. He rejoices at the thoughts of no more entering St. Stephen's Chapel."

The following contains evidence of the general appreciation of Walpole's Anecdotes of Painting in England.

"I am the more expeditious in my answer to your kind letter of yesterday, as my friend Dr. Farmer, Master of Emmanuel, calling

upon me this morning (as he often has done since I have been ill), saw your last volumes of anecdotes on my table. He told me he had been with Merrill, our principal bookseller, to get a complete set for the library (he being University librarian—the place that Dr. Middleton held), but that Merrill told him that it was difficult to get one, and even at an enormous price. He then expressed a wish that you would be so kind to your old Alma Mater, as to give your works to the public library, promising them an eminent place in it.

"You have ever been so generous to me in particular, that I am the worst person that could have been employed on such a begging errand; but my esteem for Dr. Farmer, and zeal to have your books in the University Library, give me a confidence and assurance that I should hardly have ventured on without them.

"If I take too great a liberty, I hope you will pardon me. I know the value of your books, and how difficult it is to get them: as money will not do, I wish love to the old place may have a better chance. If my request is excessive, say no more of it, and I will be equally silent to Dr. Farmer.

"Your kind and lively letter gave me spirits. I was sorry, however, to find that you pleased yourself so much with the thoughts of quitting authorship and printership—a circumstance that no one else will be happy in.

"I am surprised I have not heard from Mr. Pennant, to whom I wrote in March last, and never heard from him since.

"As I don't much know Judge Barrington, what think you of Robin Masters having the leaden mace offered to him? O' my conscience, I believe there never was a more dull, plodding heavy-headed fellow in the universe.

"I have not wrote to or heard from Dr. Lort for these three months: to-day I took courage to write to him.

"I hope things will go better than you augur. Pray God they may! I am of your great father's opinion about peace; and we enjoyed the blessing of it under his administration; but if things are so circumstanced that we cannot have it but with disgrace, we must submit to war.

In the original manuscript of the following letter, Walpole has added the passage in brackets: nevertheless, we are of Mr. Cole's opinion as to the person referred to in the sermon. Mr. Mainwaring was not likely to mean Mr. Mason when describing the "illustrious friend" of Gray.

"The Earl of Carlisle has lately sent a picture to King's College for the altar piece, which cost him 400*l*. Mr. Essex tells me the light will not suit it.

"'As you do not, I believe, purchase new sermons, a volume just published by a Mr. Mainwaring of St. John's College, an ingenious man, a passage alludes to you, I suppose, in a dissertation prefixed to them, which I will wholly transcribe that you may not have the trouble to send for the book. It is at p. 97; where speaking of the fatal jealousy of authorship that divided Mr. Page and Mr. Addison, he thus goes on: 'It is more satisfactory to conclude these notes with a striking instance of a contrary kind, and perfectly in point; for the late Mr. Gray [whom he had been speaking of before] and his illustrious friend not only excelled greatly as poets, but precisely in the same species of poetry; a circumstance which, instead of impairing the early affection between them, served only to strengthen and cement it.'" [Mr. Cole mis-states totally: I never excelled in poetry and never wrote odes. Mr. Mason is the person meant.—H. W.]

The following forms one of the numerous instances to be found in the correspondence, of Mr. Cole's diligence in hunting up curious fragments.

"Though I wrote last, I have no objection to scribble again, having met with a curious passage in Matthew Paris's Life of Paul Abbot of St. Alban's, who was elected to that office A.D. 1077, giving an account of a very early architect, one Robert, who built not only the monastery, for the chiefest part, but also that noble

pile, the Abbey church, now existing. I thought it so particular that if not already apprized of it you would be glad to have it.

"'Multa ad firmam dimisit improvide (viz., Paulus Abbas) non præcavens sibi de fallacio, et cavillationibus nequam sæculi subsequentis. Tradidit ad firmam Petro seniori de valoniis silvam quæ dicitur de northaga, &c. Concessit etiam Roberto Cementario, et hæredibus suis, pro artificio suo et labore (quibus pro omnibus cæmentariis suo tempore pollebat) terram de Syret, et terram de Wanthonio, et unam domum in villâ de Sancto Albano, solutam et quietam. Hanc nempe terram de Syret, uxor Derlewini prius tenuerat, pro qua reddebat unoquoque anno 60 solidos Ecclesiæ Sancti Albani. Abbas autem Paulus laborem ejusdem Roberti in pecunia pacta et taxa persolvisse, sine Ecclesiæ Gravamine, tenebatur. Porro deinde aliquanti temporis elapso curriculo, idem Robertus, sibi conscius quod legitimum ingressum non habuerat (unde murmur in conventu personuit) in infirmitate ultima, qua et mortuus est, terram præfatam de Syret, solutam et quietam ab omni Calumnia, tam sui, quam hæredum suorum, resignavit coram Hamelino Priore Sancti Albani, ut in Dominico esset monachorum, sicut antea fuit.'

"In the most curious book of St. Alban's, now lodged in Benet College Library, I formerly, though I had forgotten it, took the following extract:—

"'Robertus Cementarius tempore Pauli Abbatis, circà reedificationem hujus Ecclesiæ fideliter laboravit, et singulis annis quamdiu vixit dedit decem solidos Sancto Albano.'

"His portrait is illuminated, among a vast number of other benefactors to that Abbey, and is the profile of a man in brownish hair. Vide my vol. 42, p. 164."

Nothing was more improbable than the intelligence Mr. Cole now reports to his friend—the real bridegroom was one of Horace Walpole's nephews.

"An article I saw in one of the London papers yesterday, that the Hon. Horace Walpole was married to Miss Churchill, occasions you this trouble; and as your last letter of July 26 mentions your house

being full of company, I was in doubt whether I ought not to congratulate you on the occasion. If it is so, (as I don't believe), I do sincerely wish you every blessing of the married state, and every comfort in it. If it is so, it astonishes me; for I thought you as indisposed to be put out of your way, as myself: but God disposes everything for the best; and whether married or single, you have my best wishes for your happiness in every department of life.

"Poor Mr. Cotton! eldest son of Sir John,—last Monday morning, going out before breakfast to shoot rabbits in the park, by accident the gun went off, and shot him through the head. It was so near the house that the ladies heard the report of it. They were uneasy at his not coming to breakfast; for he had shifted his coat and put on his shooting-frock. As he did not come to dinner they sent about to such places as was thought probable he might dine at, and was not found till next day by one of the servants. As Sir John's affairs were much embroiled, and some differences had been between them in point of settlement, (inasmuch that the father and the three daughters had hired a house at Colchester, whither they were on the point of going, Mr. Cotton having agreed to take the estate and to allow his father 600*l.* per annum,) it was reported that the son had shot himself: but I was assured by the surgeon Mr. Thackeray, and Dr. Pennington the physician, whom I saw on Friday, who examined the body, that it was accidental. The brew-house of the Parsons family has been 40,000*l.* detriment to Sir John's estate; and I am told that Lady or Mrs. Parsons was in debt when Sir John married the daughter.

"I dined at Cambridge on Friday, and had the honour by compulsion of sitting next to the Duke of Rutland, who, though I voted against his brother, Lord Robert Manners, at the late election, was most gracious and civil to me; has promised me a heap of old evidences of his family, and of Beauvoir Priory, and invited me to Beauvoir Castle. I told his Grace that he honoured me greatly, but that I was sure never to be able to go out of this county. He said his brother has a great turn for antiquities, and what was more surprising, for the study of divinity. I told his Grace, that I rejoiced at the first, but did not tell him that I was so at the

second. Divines by profession have so puzzled and perplexed our faith, that it has almost quibbled away to nothing; and when young noblemen undertake to write on the subject, their authority and new notions will not probably contribute much to the fixture of it, according to my old orthodox plan."

Mr. Cole maintained a correspondence with several of his literary contemporaries, particularly with George Steevens, Dr. Farmer, Jacob Bryant, Dr. Bennett Bishop of Cloyne, Richard Gough, and John Nicholls. Some of his letters are preserved in the first volume of Nicholl's Literary Anecdotes. He assisted his friends in their literary labours, and was always ready to give any one who required it the advantage of his multifarious reading. He contributed the account of Pythagoras's School at Cambridge to Grose's Antiquities—the Lives of the Bishops and Deans, and the description of Ely Cathedral, to Bentham's History of Ely—a list of the Chancellors of Ely to Dr. Ducarel, and valuable suggestions to his Tour in Normandy—anecdotes, remarks, and descriptions of monuments to different works of Mr. Gough—various communications to the Gentleman's Magazine; and biographical notices to Nicholl's Select Collection of Miscellaneous Poems, and to his "Anecdotes of Hogarth." His chief labours, however, consisted in transcribing scarce manuscripts, of which he ultimately possessed an extensive collection. Walpole in 1781 said of them, —"They are great treasures, and contain something or other that must suit most tastes: not to mention

your amazing industry, neatness, legibility, with notes, arms, &c. I know no such repositories."* It is true that the student who chooses to search with the requisite diligence may find "something or other" to suit his taste: it is equally true that he will find a vast mass not likely to suit him at all. Mr. Cole possessed wonderful industry, but was terribly deficient in discrimination.

His letters to Horace Walpole indicate the plodding character of the man: but many passages have been omitted that would, had they been retained, have shown him in a less favourable light. For he had an extraordinary facility sometimes for writing a great deal about nothing, and managed to fill up several sheets of paper, when it was painfully evident he had nothing to say. He was a great sufferer from the gout, but the disease would have been terrible indeed that had prevented the untiring occupation of his pen. On he proceeded year after year adding to his transcripts, and multiplying annotations, till the month of December, 1782, when his labours ceased for ever.

Mr. Essex, writing to his friend Mr. Gough, December 18, 1782, says,

"It is with much concern I now write to acquaint you that our old friend Mr. Cole is no more. He was confined to his bed for the first time, last Thursday se'nnight. On Tuesday, the 10th, he sent for me and Mr. Lombe, the attorney, having, as he said, no time to lose, and gave directions about his will, which he had written himself; but desired him to put it into proper form, with some few alterations. His manuscripts, consisting of about 100 volumes, he

* Walpole Letters, Vol. vi. p. 110.

has given to the British Museum; likewise a collection of loose letters and papers of antiquities, which he has directed to be sorted and coarsely bound, and deposited with the manuscripts in a large strong box, not to be opened until twenty years after his death: he likewise desires that no person, except his executors, may be admitted into his study until all his letters and loose papers are sorted and locked up with the manuscripts. All his printed books are to be sold with the house and furniture, painted glass, &c., &c., and has appointed me and his old servant Tom, executors, with Mr. Lombe as overseer of his will. He died on Monday the 16th inst., about half after five in the afternoon, perfectly resigned, and sensible to the last moment, without a sigh or groan. He took a very affectionate leave of me, for the last time, about three hours before he died. He was in his 68th year. He desired to be buried under the old wooden belfry in St. Clement's parish, Cambridge, in a vault; and after the death of his sister Jane, a tower to be built over it by way of monument. He has likewise left 10*l.* for a black marble stone, to be laid in St. John's College Chapel, over the place where Mr. Baker was buried."*

Mr. Cole took the trouble of drawing up his own epitaph, whence we learn that he resided in the University of Cambridge for 20 years, that he was in the commission of the Peace for the county, and was one of the justices for the borough of Cambridge.†

His death was a great loss to his friend at Strawberry Hill. Their friendship had lasted from boyhood without the slightest interruption, and Walpole always expressed himself gratified with the affection which Mr. Cole constantly evinced towards him.

* "Nicholl's Illustrations of Literature in 18th Century." Vol. vi. p. 297.

† "Cole's MSS. British Museum." Vol. vii. p. 179.

CHAPTER IX.

WALPOLE AS CONNOISSEUR AND FINE GENTLEMAN.

WALPOLE, in his early days at Strawberry Hill, offered patronage to several individuals likely to be of assistance to him in the decoration of his gothic castle. One of these was a Swiss artist, whom Mr. Bentley secured at a fixed salary, and he was kept constantly at work, painting pictures, till he appears to have become a little impatient at the occupation. The cause of the quarrel between Mr. Müntz and his patron, according to the authority of the latter, in a letter dated November 17, 1759, was:—

"A tolerable quantity of ingratitude on his side, both to me and Mr. Bentley. The story is rather too long for a letter; the substance was most extreme impertinence to me, concluded by an abusive letter against Mr. Bentley, who sent him from starving on seven pictures for a guinea, to one hundred pounds a-year, my house, table, and utmost countenance. In short I turned his head, and was forced to turn him out of doors. You shall see the documents as it is the fashion to call proof papers. Poets and painters imagine *they* confer the honour when they are protected; and they set down impertinence to the article of their own virtue, when you dare to begin to think that an ode or a picture is not a pattern for all manner of insolence."*

* "Walpole Letters." Vol. iv. p. 2.

The lord of Strawberry Hill grows grandiloquent in describing the patronage he confers on a clever artist; and evidently fancies that a paltry hundred pounds a-year, for which poor Müntz gave at least double the value in pictures*, turned his head, and made him insolent. The concluding sentence about "poets and painters," if it mean anything, only betrays the flippant spirit with which the amateur virtuoso and man of letters regarded professional talent. It seems as if he had no real sympathy for genius, and could scarcely be brought to recognize it, unless the possessor had certain pretensions to the character of a fine gentleman.

Whether poets and painters imagine they confer any honour when they are protected, is not certain; but, in most instances, we think they confer quite as much as they obtain. Who received the highest distinction in the intimacy, Francis I. or Titian, Leo X. or Raffaelle, might be the subject of argument; but there can surely be little question that Tasso's protector was the only person honoured at the ducal court at which the poet resided; and the one title by which Lord Southampton is remembered at the present day, is the truly enviable one of having been the patron of Shakspeare.

"The utmost countenance" of Walpole, on which he chooses to lay such stress, we are inclined to think he very much overvalued. How much it added to the poor painter's weekly wages—a sum less than two

* At the Strawberry Hill sale they fetched about two guineas each.

pounds, which might be earned by a skilful and industrious mechanic—he does not condescend to state. We entertain some suspicion that Müntz was ill-used, and left Strawberry Hill in disgust. Walpole, had he anything like a just sense of art, would not have ventured to speak of parting with an artist of recognized talent who had become dissatisfied with his position, in the terms he could only with common decency have used when relating the dismissal of a menial detected in some act of flagrant delinquency. All the tirade in which he indulges, about impertinence, insolence, and turning out of doors, is in very bad taste. His criticism on art could sometimes be in a taste equally bad.

In a letter dated May 5, 1761, he writes:—

"The true frantic Œstus resides at present with Mr. Hogarth; I went t'other morning to see a portrait he is painting of Mr. Fox. Hogarth told me he had promised if Mr. Fox would sit as he liked, to make as good a picture as Vandyke or Rubens could, I was silent—'Why, now,' said he: 'you think this very vain, but why should not one speak truth?' This *truth* was uttered in the face of his own Sigismunda, which is exactly a maudlin w——, tearing off the trinkets that her keeper had given her, to fling at his head. She has her father's picture in a bracelet on her arm, and *her fingers* are bloody with the heart, as if she had just bought a sheep's pluck in St. James' market."

This is not only disgusting, it is false; the fingers are not bloody. He proceeds:—

"As I was going, Hogarth put on a very grave face, and said, 'Mr. Walpole, I want to speak to you.' I sat down and said I was ready to receive his commands. For shortness, I will mark this wonderful dialogue by initial letters. H.—I am told you are going to entertain the town with something in our way. W.—Not

very soon, Mr. Hogarth. H.—I wish you would let me have it to correct; I should be very sorry to have you expose yourself to censure: we painters must know more of these things than other people. W.—Do you think nobody understands painting but painters? H.—Oh! so far from it, there's Reynolds, who certainly has genius; why, but t'other day he offered a hundred pounds for a picture, that I would not hang in my cellar: and, indeed, to say truth, I have generally found that persons who had studied painting least were the best judges of it; but what I wished to say to you was about Sir James Thornhill (you know he married Sir James's daughter), I would not have you say anything against him. There was a book published some time ago abusing him, and it gave great offence. He was the first that attempted history in England, and I assure you, some Germans have said that he was a very great painter. W.—My work will go no lower than the year one thousand seven hundred; and I really have not considered whether Sir J. Thornhill will come within my plan or not—if he does, I fear you and I shall not agree upon his merits. H.—I wish you would let me correct it; besides I am writing something of the same kind myself: I should be sorry we should clash. W.—I believe it is not much known what my work is, very few persons have seen it. H.—Why it is a critical history of painting, is not it? W.—No, it is an antiquarian history of it in England; I bought Mr. Vertue's MSS., and I believe the work will not give much offence: besides, if it does I cannot help it. When I publish anything, I give it to the world to think of it as they please.* H.—Oh! if it is an antiquarian work, we shall not clash; mine is a critical work. I don't know whether I shall ever publish it. It is rather an apology for painters. I think it is owing to the good sense of the English that they have not painted better. W.—My dear Mr. Hogarth, I must take my leave of you, you now grow too wild.

"And I left him. If I had stayed, there remained nothing but for him to bite me. 'I give you my honour this conversation is literal; and perhaps as long as you have known Englishmen and painters, you never met with anything so distracted. I had conse-

* But when the world exercised this privilege, he was offended.

crated a line to his genius (I mean, for wit) in my preface; I shall not erase it, but I hope nobody will ask me if he is not mad."*

Probably Hogarth, who, with all his faults, was a true artist, entertained a reasonable distrust of Walpole's artistic knowledge; and because he evinced this, the latter felt quite satisfied he had lost his senses.

The following piece of criticism on two celebrated contemporary artists, gives the reader no very high opinion of the connoisseur.

"I have discovered another very agreeable writer among your countrymen," he writes to Sir David Dalrymple, "and in a profession where I did not look for an author. It is Mr. Ramsay the painter, whose pieces, being anonymous, have been overlooked. He has a great deal of genuine wit, and a very just manner of reasoning. In his own walk he has great merit. He and Mr. Reynolds are our favorite painters, and two of the very best we ever had. Indeed, the number of good has been very small, considering the numbers there are. A very few years ago there were computed two thousand portrait painters in London; I do not exaggerate the computation, but diminish it, though I think it must have been exaggerated. [It was greatly exaggerated.] Mr. Reynolds and Mr. Ramsay can scarce be rivals; their manners are so different. The former is bold, and has a kind of tempestuous colouring, yet with dignity and grace; the latter is all delicacy. Mr. Reynolds *seldom succeeds in women*—Mr. Ramsay is formed to paint them." †

Surely Walpole could never have seen any of Sir Joshua's female portraits. How many scores has he painted, as women were never painted before! Where they have been taken proper care of, they remain as fresh and as beautiful as they were the first day they left the easel. Posterity has completely reversed Walpole's estimate of the two painters. To Ramsay's

* "Walpole Letters." Vol. iv. p. 140.

† "Walpole Letters." Vol. iii. p. 435.

female portraits the public is indifferent; but when a sale takes place of Sir Joshua's gems of portraiture, the picture realizes an almost incredible sum, and is knocked down to the spirited bidder amid a storm of applause from an enthusiastic audience.

Walpole's discovery of the portrait of Count Grammont, in Paris, he announces to his friend Lady Hervey:—

"Oh, madam, madam, madam, what do you think I have found since I wrote my letter this morning? I am out of my wits! never was anything like my luck! it never forsakes me! I have found Count Grammont's picture! I believe I shall see company upon it—certainly keep the day holy. I went to the Grand Augustins to see the pictures of the reception of the Knights of the Holy Ghost; they carried me into a chamber full of their portraits. I was looking for Bassompierre; my *laquais de louage* opened a door, and said 'Here are more.' One of the first that struck me was Philibert Comte de Grammont. It is old, not at all handsome, but has a great deal of finesse in the countenance. I shall think of nothing now but having it copied." *

This hero was a fine gentleman after his own heart, and also an author of a lively book of scandalous memoirs; a combination of merits to which Walpole could not refuse his enthusiasm. But of this scandalous book, this mirror of a boasting, unscrupulous courtier, half black-leg, half profligate, the Count must share the reputation with his brother-in-law, Count Anthony Hamilton, who was, in point of fact, the real author of the book, though Grammont deserves the credit of having invented the discreditable narratives of which it is composed. It is curious to mark how much Walpole's sympathies were with

* "Walpole Letters." Vol. v. p. 103.

men of this type, and with women of a type no better —the gaily-dressed, ill-principled, well-formed, superficially charming butterflies that sported in the sunshine of royal favour.

Walpole was often as much dissatisfied with engravers as with painters. He could not get them to think with him, on the best method of advancing themselves and their art. Of this he complains, in the following extract from a letter dated February 23, 1764:—

"Our artists get so much money by hasty, slovenly performances, that they will undertake nothing that requires labour and time. I have never been able to persuade any one of them to engrave the Beauties at Windsor,* which are daily perishing for want of fires in that place. Most of them entered into a plan I had undertaken, of an edition of Grammont with portraits.† I had three executed; but after the first, which was well done, the others were so wretchedly performed, though even the best was much too dear, that I was forced to drop the design. Walker, who has done much the best heads in my new volumes, told me, when I pressed him to consider his reputation, that he had got fame enough. What hopes, Sir, can one entertain, after so shameful an answer." ‡

Surely the man was the best judge of the sufficiency of his own fame. If any one had told Walpole to attempt some great work to which he was not disposed, and consider his reputation, Walker's answer would have been the one he would have adopted, and it would have been extremely difficult to prove to him that there was anything "shameful" in it.

He could write in a very different vein when he

* Since done, and the work edited by Mrs. Jameson, in 2 vols. 4to.

† Since done.

‡ "Walpole Letters." Vol. iv. p. 379.

chose, and be much more liberal in his sentiments. On one occasion he says :—

" I have never yet seen or heard anything serious, that was not ridiculous. Jesuits, Methodists, philosophers, politicians, the hypocrite Rousseau, the scoffer Voltaire, the encyclopædists, the Humes, the Lytteltons, the Grenvilles, the Atheist tyrant of Prussia, and *the mountebank of history*, Mr. Pitt, are all, to me, but impostors in their various ways. Fame or interest is their object; and, after all their parade, I think a ploughman who sows, reads his almanack, and believes the stars but so many farthing candles, created to prevent his falling into a ditch as he goes home at night, a wiser and more rational being, and I am sure an honester than any of them."*

This is a startling paragraph, and evidently written to surprise rather than convince. As little faith should be put in the littleness he attributes to so many great spirits, as in the greatness with which he overwhelms an ignoble one. Walpole, when brought into communication with either of the celebrities he thus disparages, would have been among the first to acknowledge his pre-eminence; and if it had happened that he had come into contact with a ploughman, he would have been much more considerate of his own refinement than for the other's honesty or wisdom.

To Vertue, Walpole owed a considerable share of the information on art, which appears in the various productions of his pen, illustrating artistic subjects. In addition to such productions already mentioned, he published "Ædes Walpoliana," a descriptive catalogue of the Houghton Gallery, preceded by a slight sketch of the Italian, French, and Flemish schools of art: prefaces to Vertue's catalogues of Charles I.,

* Walpole Letters." Vol. v. p. 101.

James II., and the Duke of Buckingham's collections of pictures. He wrote also a biography of this industrious artist; compiled from his manuscript notes, followed by a list of engravings executed by him: and the more important "Catalogue of Engravers," which in the postcript to the second edition, published in 1786, he acknowledges to be the most imperfect part of their joint accounts of the history and progress of the arts in England.

Walpole made additions to his library at every available opportunity, and sometimes, by the zeal of a collector, was led into greater disbursements for books than could be sanctioned by their real value. One instance of this imprudence he thus relates:—

"In the catalogue of Dr. Mead's library, I saw 'Winstanley's Views of Audley Inn,' which I concluded was, as it really was, a thin dirty folio, worth about fifteen shillings. As I thought it might be scarce, it might run to two or three guineas: however, I bid Graham certainly buy it for me. He came the next morning in a great fright, said he did not know whether he had done very right or very wrong, that he had gone as far as nine and forty guineas: I started in such a fright! Another bookseller had luckily had as unlimited a commission, and bid fifty—when my Graham begged it might be adjourned, till they could consult their principals. I think I shall never give an unbounded commission again." *

Walpole rarely suffered any opportunity to pass over without adding to his collections. Books, manuscripts, prints, pictures, coins, medals, furniture, and what are called objects of *virtù*, accumulated in every corner of his gothic castle; and it took up no small portion of his time to arrange his acquisitions in their appropriate places. Strawberry Hill began to assume

* "Walpole Letters." Vol. iii. p. 89.

the aspect of a museum, to be curator and exhibitor of which, promised the owner ample employment; and when he had visitors of consequence to introduce to its numerous attractions, he was in his glory.

Walpole was ambitious of forming a collection of pictures, and purchased works of art with that object. His ambition seemed to be to make his modern structure resemble as nearly as possible the few Gothic castles then inhabited in England, with the artistic treasures collected within those walls by succeeding generations. Writing under the date of June 11th, 1753, he says :—

"I cannot leave my workmen, especially as we have a painter who paints the paper on the staircase under Mr. Bentley's direction. The armoury bespeaks the ancient chivalry of the lords of the castle; and I have filled Mr. Bentley's Gothic lanthorn with painted glass, which casts the most venerable gloom on the stairs that ever was seen since the days of Abelard. The lanthorn itself in which I have stuck a coat of the Veres, is supposed to have come from Castle Henningham. Lord and Lady Vere were here t'other day, and called cousins with it, and would very readily have invited it to Hanworth; but her Portuguese blood has so *blackened* the true stream, that I could not bring myself to offer so fair a gift to their chapel."*

The Gothic lanthorn was a favourite hobby of the time; it was intended to throw "a dim religious light" on the sombre ornaments of the great hall and staircase, and the larger was this specimen of grandeur, the greater was considered the consequence of the lord of the building. The gallery was also a feature in all old mansions, and was destined to be equally a feature at Strawberry Hill. Its lord had

* "Walpole Letters," Vol. iii. p. 2.

many friends to assist him in forming a suitable collection, and he wanted neither enterprise nor taste.

It is impossible to give here any detailed account of the works he succeeded in getting together; very few were as valuable as he considered them, and there was a considerable difference in the price at which they were purchased, and the price at which they were ultimately sold. The picture of the marriage of Henry VII. and Elizabeth of York, representing two other persons, supposed to be St. Thomas and the Bishop of Mola, the Pope's nuncio, by whom the nuptial benediction was pronounced, was obtained at the cost of two hundred pounds by Lady Pomfret, to whom the Earl of Orford offered five hundred pounds for it. At the Pomfret sale it was sold to Horace Walpole for eighty-four guineas.

The portrait by Vasari of the Grand Duchess Bianca Capello, Walpole saw at the palace of the Marchese Vitelli, at Florence, and admired it so much, that on a sale of the Vitelli property, Sir Horace Mann purchased it for him, and sent it to England. The lady was the daughter of a noble Venetian. She had been seduced and carried off from her father's house by a young Florentine of low origin, named Peter Bonaventuri. They came to Florence, where she became the mistress of the Grand Duke of Tuscany, Francis of Medicis. He was very anxious to have a child by her; upon which she pretended to be brought to bed of a son, who had in reality been bought of persons of low origin. He was called Don Anthony of Medicis. In order

to prevent the Grand Duke from discovering her fraud, Bianca caused several of the persons who had had a part in the deception to be assassinated. At length the wife of Francis, the Archduchess Joan of Austria, died in child-bed, and Bianca intrigued so successfully, that she persuaded her lover to marry her. Her marriage with the Grand Duke took place on the 12th of October, 1579, and was so sumptuous that it cost one hundred thousand Florentine ducats. Her tyranny and rapacity soon made her universally hated. She is supposed, as well as her husband, to have died of poison, administered to them through the means of his brother, the Cardinal Ferdinand of Medicis, who succeeded him as Grand Duke.

Of this picture he writes, January 28, 1754, to Sir Horace Mann :—

"Her Serene Highness the Great Duchess Bianca Capello is arrived safe at a palace lately taken for her in Arlington-street. She has been much visited by the quality and gentry, and pleases universally by the graces of her person, and comeliness of her deportment. The head is painted equal to Titian; and though done, I suppose, after the clock had struck five and thirty, yet she retains a great share of beauty. I have bespoken a frame for her, with the grand ducal coronet at top, her story on a label at the bottom, which Gray is to compose in Latin, as short and expressive as Tacitus (one is lucky when one can bespeak and have executed such an inscription); the Medici arms on one side, and the Capello's on the other."*

Walpole obtained an interesting portrait of the poet Cowley, painted by Sir Peter Lely, a Ninon de L'Enclos, the Duke of Suffolk, and Mary Queen of France ;† several paintings from the Houghton Gal-

* "Walpole Letters." Vol. iii. p. 33." It sold for sixteen guineas.

† "Sold to the Duke of Bedford for 535*l.* 10*s.*

lery—the man and woman seated in a garden, by Watteau, was about the best of them, but in general, though bearing very high names, they were far from bearing a corresponding character. Walpole, however, succeeded in obtaining several miniatures which were as fine as anything of the kind that had ever been painted—those of the Digby family, by Oliver, and those of members of the Stuart family by Petitot, are unrivalled. Some of his antiquarian pictures were particularly curious, and excited general attention.

Walpole never failed to attend all remarkable auctions: of one that attracted considerable attention at the time, he says:—

"March 27, 1755. I have passed five entire days lately at Dr. Mead's sale, where, however, I bought very little: as extravagantly as he paid for everything, his name has even resold them with interest. Lord Rockingham gave two hundred and thirty guineas for the Antinous—the dearest bust that, I believe, was ever sold; yet the nose and chin were repaired, and very ill. Lord Exeter bought the Homer for one hundred and thirty."*

This Doctor Mead flourished as a fashionable physician about the commencement of the eighteenth century, and was an extensive collector before extensive collecting became a mania. His things fetched good prices, and many of them were valuable, At other sales, Walpole laid out more largely. At Lady Betty Germaine's, he purchased among other articles of *virtù*, three chased silver centre vases, and a pair of large silver beakers.† At Lady Vere's, he obtained a pair of massive silver chased candelabras.‡

* "Walpole Letters." Vol. iii. p. 108.

† They were sold at the Strawberry Hill sale to Sir William Middleton, for 755*l.* 7*s.*

‡ Sold to Earl Cadogan for 124*l.* 8*s.* 6*d.*

But the mere enumeration of his acquisitions in this way would fill many pages.

The mania of picture hanging was in full operation at this time, and though no one experienced its symptoms more thoroughly than the Lord of Strawberry Hill, it seems from a passage in one of his letters of the date of Feb. 10, 1758, that he was fully alive to their extravagance in his contemporaries :—

"You would have been amazed had you been here at Sir Luke Schaub's auction of pictures. He had picked up some good old copies cheap when he was in Spain, during the contentions between the Houses of Austria and Bourbon, and when many Grandees being confiscated, the rest piqued themselves on not profitting of their spoils. With these Sir Luke had some fine small ones, and a parcel of Flemish, good in their way. The late Prince offered him twelve thousand pounds for the whole, leaving him the enjoyment for his life. As he knew the twelve thousand pounds would not be forthcoming, he artfully excused himself by saying, he loved pictures so well that he knew he should fling away the money. Indeed, could he have touched it, it had been well: the collection was indubitably not worth four thousand pounds. It has sold for near eight (7784*l.* 5*s.*). A copy of the King of France's Raphael went for seven hundred pounds; a Sigismunda, called by Correggio, but certainly by Furoni, his scholar, was bought in at upwards of four hundred pounds: in short. there is Sir John Lowther, Mr. Spencer, Sir Richard Grosvenor,—boys with twenty and thirty thousand a-year; and the Duchess of Portland, Lord Ashburnham, Lord Egremont, and others, with near as much, who care not what they give. I want to paint my coat, and sell it off my back: there never was such a season. I am mad to have the Houghton pictures sold now; what injury to the creditors to have them postponed till half of these vast estates are spent, and the other half grown ten years older."*

Notwithstanding this pictorial emulation, Walpole

* "Walpole Letters." Vol. iii. p. 344.

so contrived to cover his walls that he greatly added to the attractions of his Gothic castle.

While acting the part of Squire o' Dames to his guests, to which he was rather partial, Walpole met with an adventure that partook of the sublime and the ridiculous :—

June 6th, 1756.—"My Lady Ailesbury, Mr. Conway, and Miss Rich, passed two days last week at Strawberry Hill. We were returning from Mrs. Clive's through the long field, and had got over the high style that comes into the road; that is, three of us. It had rained and the style was wet. I could not let Miss Rich straddle across so damp a palfrey, but took her in my arms to lift her over. At that instant I saw a coach and six come thundering down the hill from my house; and hurrying to set down my charge, and stepping backwards, I missed the first step, came down headlong with the nymph in my arms; but, turning quite round as we rushed to the ground, the first thing that touched the earth was Miss Rich's head. * * * The coach came on and never stopped. The apprehension that it would run over my Chloe made me lie where I was, holding out my arm to keep off the horses, which narrowly missed trampling us to death. The ladies, who were Lady Holderness, Miss Pelham, and your sister, Lady Mary Coke, stared with astonishment at the theatre which they thought I had chosen to celebrate our loves; the footmen laughed, and you may imagine the astonishment of Mr. Conway and Lady Ailesbury, who did not see the fall, but turned and saw our attitude. It was these spectators that amazed Miss Pelham, who described the adventure to Mr. Pitt, and said, "What was most amazing, there were Mr. Conway and Lady Ailesbury looking on."*

Walpole had other things to do besides making summersaults with young ladies, and giving an account of them. He also makes us acquainted with his political sentiments, which seems to have been at this time ultra-liberal.

* "Walpole Letters." Vol. iii. p. 220.

Writing under the date of October, 1756, he says :—

"You bid me give you some account of myself; I can in a very few words. I am quite alone: in the morning I view a new pond I am making for gold fish, and stick in a few shrubs of trees wherever I can find a space, which is very rare: in the evening I scribble a little; all this mixed with reading—that is, I can't say I read much, but I pick up a good deal of reading. The only thing I have done that can compose a paragraph, and which I think you are Whig enough to forgive me, is that on each side of my bed I have hung up Magna Charta and the warrant for King Charles' execution, on which I have written Major Charta, as I believe without the latter the former by this time would be of very little importance."*

Without undervaluing that *major Charta* of which the aristocratic lord of Strawberry hill thought so highly; one may be disposed to call in question the genuineness of that republicanism which he sometimes affected. Though he occasionally took a great deal of pains to make people believe that he was as simple as a hermit in his tastes, and as sober as a Quaker in his ideas, he was in heart and mind as thorough a worshipper of artificial distinctions as if he had lived all his life studying the accomplishments of a Page of the back stairs.

In the month of September 1757, Walpole's eyes became so painful in consequence of overworking them at night, as to excite serious apprehensions for his sight. He attributes the mischief to "a cold caught in the hot weather by giving myself Florentine airs, by lying with my windows open, and by lying on the ground without my waistcoat:" bravadoes against the climate he was

* "Walpole Letters." Vol. iii. p. 242.

rather too fond of attempting for a person of his delicate constitution. A simple remedy* recommended to him by his friend, Mr. Chute, relieved him so much that he was able to resume his literary labours, but the evil recurred again very shortly, for in the next month he complains to Sir Horace Mann that his eyes are of very little use to him.

Walpole occasionally gave himself other airs that were not "Florentine," and loved nothing better than playing off a few freaks to display his independent habits and freedom from ceremony, for the astonishment of the simple and the wonder of the incredulous. In the following passage from one of his letters, he has recorded an instance of this:—

"You cannot imagine," he writes, "how astonished a Mr. Seward, a learned clergyman, was, who came to Ragley while I was there (Aug. 20, 1758). Strolling about the house, he saw me first sitting on the pavement of the lumber room with Louis, all over cobwebs and dirt and mortar; then found me in his own room on a ladder, writing on a picture; and half-an-hour afterwards lying on the grass in the court with the dogs and the children, in my slippers and without my hat. He had had some doubt whether I was the painter or the factotum of the family; but you would have died at his surprise when he saw me walk into dinner dressed and sit by Lady Hertford. Lord Lyttelton was there, and the conversation turned on literature; finding me not quite ignorant added to the parson's wonder; but he could not contain himself any longer when, after dinner, he saw me go to romps and jumping with the two boys; he broke out to my Lady Hertford, and begged to know who and what sort of a man I really was, for he had never met with anything of the kind."†

* An application of equal parts of white spirits of lavender and Hungary water; but this was soon abandoned for one part rum and three parts elder flower water.

† "Walpole Letters." Vol. iii. p. 383.

Horace, however, could not afford time to astonish parsons too frequently. He had always plenty of occupations, and though Strawberry Hill had long been completed, it was not so complete but what it afforded its ingenious owner ample space for improvement.

Writing on, he says :—

"I am again got into the hands of builders, though this time to a very small extent—only the addition of a little cloister and bed-chamber. A day may come that will produce a gallery, a round tower, a large cloister and a cabinet, in the manner of a little chapel; but I am too poor for these ambitious designs yet, and I have so many ways of dispersing my money, that I don't know when I shall be richer. However, I amuse myself infinitely; besides my printing house, which is constantly at work, besides such a treasure of taste and drawing as my friend Mr. Bentley, I have a painter in the house, who is an engraver too, a mechanic, an everything.* He was a Swiss engineer in the French service; but his regiment being broken at the peace, Mr. Bentley found him in the Isle of Jersey, and fixed him with me. He has an astonishing genius for landscape, and, added to that, all the industry and patience of a German. We are just now practising, and have succeeded surprisingly, in a new method of painting discovered at Paris by Count Caylus, and intended to be the encaustic of the ancients. My Swiss has painted, I am writing the account, and my press is to notify our improvements. In short, to finish all the works I have in hand, and all the schemes I have in my head, I cannot afford to live less than fifty years more."†

He had already entertained many visitors of distinction, among others he records a breakfast given to the Bedford Court, May 4, 1755; but scarcely a month passed by without some important arrival, scarcely a week without some lively festival.

* Mr Müntz.

† "Walpole Letters." Vol. iii. p. 389.

"Strawberry Hill is grown a perfect Paphos," he writes at the commencement of June, 1759; "it is the land of beauties. On Wednesday the Duchesses of Hamilton and Richmond, and Lady Ailesbury dined there; the two latter stayed all night. There never was so pretty a sight as to see them all three sitting in the shell. A thousand years hence, when I begin to grow old, if that can ever be, I shall talk of that event, and tell young people how much handsomer the women of my time were than they will be then."*

This shell was one of Mr. Walpole's favourite inventions—for Strawberry Hill was crammed with inventions and contrivances. It was a seat in the form of a huge bivalve of a species not easily recognized, which generally elicited a vast amount of wonder and admiration from his visitors. Other beauties besides those just named, were fond of resting their graceful figures upon it. Playing the host to such visitors was extremely agreeable to him; it afforded him opportunities for exhibiting that refined gallantry on which he prided himself. He took care to convince everybody that in making him a man of letters and a connoisseur, nature had not spoilt a fine gentleman. At last Strawberry Hill became a favourite show-place; it was a public exhibition instead of a private one; still its master went on, adding, altering improving, enriching, till its splendour began to astonish himself.

Walpole let his friends know he was getting into good company. Early in January, 1760, he writes:

"I am now almost ready to say *we* instead of *I*. In short I live amongst royalty; considering the plenty that is no great wonder. All the world live with them, and they with all the world. Princes and Princesses open shops in every corner of the town, and th

* "Walpole Letters." Vol. iii. p. 454.

whole town deals with them. As I have gone to one, I choose to frequent all, that I might not be particular and seem to have views; and yet it went so much against me, that I came to town on purpose a month ago for the Duke's *levée*, and had engaged Brand to go with me, and then could not bring myself to it. At last I went to him and Princess Emily yesterday. It was well I had not flattered myself with being still in my bloom; I am grown so old since they saw me, that neither of them knew me. When they were told, he just spoke to me (I forgive him; he is not out of my debt even with that); she was exceedingly gracious, and commended Strawberry to the skies. To-night I was asked to their party at Norfolk House. These parties are wonderfully select and dignified; one might sooner be a Knight of Malta than qualified for them; I don't know how the Duchess of Devonshire, Mr. Fox and I were forgiven some of our ancestors. There were two tables at loo, two at whist, and a quadrille. I was commanded to the Duke's loo; he was sat down; not to make him wait, I threw my hat upon the marble table, and broke four pieces off a great crystal chandelier. I stick to my etiquette, and treat them with great respect; not as I do my friend the Duke of York. But don't let us talk any more of princes."*

Walpole, however, as will be plainly seen, had no objection whatever to talk of princes, and did talk of them or rather write of them on every available opportunity.

There was a sort of martial mania at this time spreading throughout England, to which he refers before describing the gay coteries with which he was then in the habit of mingling.

"It is so much the fashion to raise regiments," he observes, "that I wish there were such a neutral kind of beings in England as abbés, that one might have an excuse for not growing military mad, when one has turned the heroic corner of one's age. I am ashamed of being a young rake, when my seniors are covering their grey coupées with helmets and feathers, and accoutering their pot-bellies with cuirasses and martial masquerade habits. Yet rake I

* "Walpole Letters." Vol. iv. p. 12.

am, and abominably so, for a person that begins to wrinkle reverently. I have set up twice this week till between two and three with the Duchess of Grafton, at loo, who by the way, has got a pam-child this morning; and on Saturday night I supped with Prince Edward at my Lady Rochford's, and we stayed till half an hour past three. My favour with that Highness continues, or rather increases. He makes everybody make suppers for him to meet me, for I still hold out against going to Court; in short, if he were twenty years older, or I could make myself twenty years younger, I might carry him to Camden House, and be as impertinent as ever my Lady Churchill was; but as I dread being ridiculous, I shall give my Lord Bute no uneasiness. My Lady Maynard who divides the favour of this tiny Court with me, supped with us. Did you know she sings French ballads very prettily? Lord Rochford played on the guitar, and the Prince sung; there were my two nieces and Lord Waldegrave, Lord Huntingdon, and Mr. Morrison the groom, and the evening was pleasant; but I had a much more agreeable supper last night at Mrs. Clive's with Miss West, my niece Cholmondely, and Murphy the writing actor, who is very good company, and, two or three more. Mrs. Cholmondely is very lively; you know how entertaining the Clive is, and Miss West is an absolute original."*

A little later in the same month he describes another fashionable party.

"I will tell you how I passed yesterday. A party was made to go to the Magdalen House. We met at Northumberland House at five, and set out in four coaches. Prince Edward, Colonel Brudenell his groom, Lady Northumberland, Lady Mary Coke, Lady Carlisle, Miss Pelham, Lady Hertford, Lord Beauchamp, Lord Huntingdon, old Bowman, and I. This new convent is beyond Goodman's Fields, and I assure you would content any Catholic alive. We were received by —— oh! first, a vast mob, for Princes are not so common at that end of the town as at this. Lord Hertford, at the head of the governors with their white staves, met us at the door, and led the Prince directly into the chapel, where before the altar, was an arm-chair for him, with a blue damask cushion, a *prie Dieu*, and a foot stool of black cloth with gold nails. We sat

* "Walpole Letters." Vol. iv. p. 15.

on forms near him. There were Lord and Lady Dartmouth in the ardour of devotion, and many city ladies. The Chapel is small and low, but neat, hung with gothic paper and tablets of benefactions. At the west end, were enclosed the sisterhood, above one hundred and thirty, all in greyish brown stuffs, broad handkerchiefs, and flat straw hats, with a blue riband pulled right over their faces. As soon as we entered the chapel, the organ played, and the Magdalens sung a hymn in parts; you cannot imagine how well. The chapel was dressed with orange and myrtle, and there wanted nothing but a little incense to drive away the devil—or to invite him. Prayers then began, psalms and a sermon; the latter by a young clergyman, one Dodd, who contributed to the Popish idea one had imbibed, by haranguing entirely in the French style, and very eloquently and touchingly. He apostrophised the lost sheep, who sobbed and cried from their souls; so did my Lady Hertford and Fanny Pelham, till I believe the city dames took them both for Jane Shores. The confessor then turned to the audience, and addressed himself to his Royal Highness, whom he called most illustrious Prince, beseeching his protection. In short it was a very pleasant performance, and I got *the most illustrious* to desire it might be printed. We had another hymn, and then were conducted to the *parloir*, where the governors kissed the Prince's hand, and then the Lady Abbess or matron, brought us tea. From thence we went to the refectory, where all the nuns, without their hats, were ranged at long tables, ready for supper. A few were handsome, many who seemed to have no title to their professions, and two or three of twelve years old; but all recovered and looking healthy. I was struck and pleased with the modesty of two of them, who swooned away with the confusion of being stared at. We were then shown their work, which is making linen, and bead work; they earn ten pounds a week."*

Walpole goes on to make some profane allusions which are better omitted. The Magdalen, then a new institution, was established for the reformation of females, of whose frailty, unfortunately, there could be no doubt. It still exists: one of those well meaning attempts at the improvement of our social morals,

* "Walpole's Letters." Vol. iv. p. 20.

which begin at the wrong end, shutting the stable-door after the steed has been abstracted. If a tithe of the philanthropy which is so lavishly bestowed on vice, were given to virtue, when virtue most needs assistance, such anomalous establishments would be unnecessary.

The manor of Whichnovre, near Lichfield, was granted by the Earls of Lancaster, lords of the manor of Tutbury, in the tenth year of the reign of Edward III., to Sir Philip de Somerville, upon two trifling fees—saddled, however, with the condition of his having "arrayed, all times of the year but Lent, one bacon flyke, hanging in his hall at Whichnovre, to be given to every man or woman who demanded it a year and a day after marriage, upon their swearing they would not have changed for none other, fairer nor fouler, richer nor poorer, nor for no other descended of great lineage, sleeping nor waking, at no time." Mr. Walpole was on a visit to the proprietor, Mr. Offley, towards the latter end of August, 1760, and thence thus addresses his cousin's wife, the Countess of Ailesbury :—

"Well, Madam, if I had known whither I was coming, I would not have come alone! Mr. Conway and your Ladyship should have come too. Do you know this is the individual manor house where married ladies may have a flitch of bacon upon the easiest terms in the world. I should expect that the owners would be ruined in satisfying the conditions of the obligation, and that the park would be stocked with hogs instead of deer. On the contrary, it is thirty years since the flitch was claimed, and Mr. Offley was never so near losing one as when you and Mr. Conway were at Ragley. He so little expects the flitch was claimed, that the flitch is only hung in effigy over the hall chimney, carved in wood Are you not ashamed, Madam, never to have put in your claim? It is above

a year and a day that you have been married, and I never once heard either of you mention a journey to Whichnovre. If you quarrelled at loo, every night, you could not quit your pretensions with more indifference. I had a great mind to take my oath, as one of your witnesses, that neither of you would, if you were at liberty, prefer anybody else, *ne fairer ne fouler*, and I could easily get twenty persons to swear the same. Therefore, unless you will let the world be convinced that all your apparent harmony is counterfeit, you must set out immediately for Mr. Offley's, or at least send me a letter of attorney, to claim the flitch in your names, and I will send it up by the coach, to be left at the Blue Boar, or wherever you will have it delivered. But you had better come in person; you will see one of the prettiest spots in the world; it is a little Paradise, and the more like the antique one, as, by all I have said, the married couple seems to be driven out of it. The house is very indifferent; behind is a pretty park; the situation, a brow of a hill commanding sweet meadows, through which the Trent serpentizes in numberless windings and branches. The spires of the Cathedral of Lichfield are in front, at a distance, with variety of other steeples, seats, and farms, and the horizon bounded by rich hills, covered with blue woods. If you love a prospect, or bacon, you will certainly come hither."*

Whether Lady Ailesbury was indifferent both to the prospect and the bacon we are not informed; but the flitch was not claimed by her. She may be classed with those excellent wives, who are content to love their husbands, without requiring such an additional relish to their domestic meal. Possibly the neglect of the Whichnovre testimonial may exhibit the influence of a pagan superstition: the felicity of such women as Lady Ailesbury is not likely to be increased by fragments of an animal, against whom Love must have entertained an implacable aversion since his mother mourned the slaughter of Adonis.

* "Walpole Letters." Vol. iv. p. 80.

Walpole's labours and amusements were sometimes interrupted by very painful attacks of the gout. He however appears to have borne his visitations of this trying disorder with a great deal of good humour. Writing to the Earl of Strafford in August, he says:

"You will laugh, but I am ready to cry, when I tell you that I have no notion when I shall be able to wait on you. Such a calamity! My tower is not fallen down, nor Lady Fanny Shirley run away with another printer; nor has my Lady D * * * * insisted on living with me as half-way to Weybridge. Something more disgraceful than all these, and wofully mortifying for a young creature, who is at the same time in love with Lady Mary Coke, and following the Duchess of Grafton and loo all over the kingdom. In short, my lord, I have got the gout—yes, the gout in earnest. I was seized on Monday morning, suffered dismally all night, am now wrapped in flannels like the picture of a Morocco ambassador, and am carried to bed by two servants. You see virtue and leanness are no preservatives.*

After describing this attack to his friend, Mr. Montagu, he adds,—

"If either my father or mother had had it, I should not dislike it so much. I am herald enough to approve it, if descended genealogically; but it is an absolute upstart in me, and what is more provoking, I had trusted to my great abstinence for keeping me from it; but thus it is, if I had had any gentlemanlike virtue, as patriotism, or loyalty, I might have got something by them; I had nothing but that beggarly virtue, temperance, and she had not interest enough to keep me from a fit of the gout. Another plague is, that everybody that ever knew anybody that had it is so good as to come with advice, and direct me how to manage it: that is, how to contrive to have it for a great many years. I am very refractory; I say to the gout, as great personages do to the executioner, 'Friend, do your work as quick as you can.' They tell me of wine to keep it out of the stomach, but I will starve temperance itself; I will be virtuous indeed—that is, I will stick to

* "Walpole Letters." Vol. iv. p. 76

virtue, though I find it is not its own reward."* He concludes with "My tower erects its battlements bravely; my 'Anecdotes of Painting' thrive exceedingly; thanks to the gout, that has pinned me to my chair; think of Ariel the sprite, in a slit shoe."

In the autumn of the same year he was honoured with a visit from two of the Royal Princes, and the result seems to have given mutual satisfaction.

"Last Friday morning" he writes, "I was very tranquilly writing my 'Anecdotes of Painting,' I heard the bell at the gate ring: I called out, as usual, 'not at home:' but Harry, who thought it would be treason to tell a lie when he saw red liveries, owned I was, and came running up,—'Sir, the Prince of Wales is at the door, and says he has come on purpose to make you a visit.' There was I, in the utmost confusion, undressed, in my slippers, and with my hair about my ears; there was no help *insanem vatem aspicite*—and down I went to receive him. Him, was the Duke of York. Behold my breeding of the old Court: at the foot of the stairs I kneeled down, and kissed his hand. I beg your uncle Algernon Sidney's pardon, but I could not let the second Prince of the Blood kiss my hand first. He was, as he always is, extremely good humoured; and I, as I am not always, extremely respectful. He stayed two hours; nobody with him but Morrison. I showed him all my castle, the pictures of the Pretender's sons, and that type of the Reformation, Henry VIII—moulded into a weight to the clock he gave Anne Boleyn. But observe my luck; he would have the sanctum sanctorum in the library opened: about a month ago I removed the MSS. in another place. All this is very well; but now for the consequences: what was I to do next? I have not been in a Court these ten years, consequently have never kissed hands in the next reign. Could I have let a Duke of York visit me, and never go to thank him? I know, if I was a great poet, I might be so brutal, and tell the world in rhyme that rudeness is virtue; or if I was a patriot, I might, after laughing at Kings and Princes for twenty years, catch at the first opening to favour, and beg a place."

* "Walpole's Letters." Vol. iv. p. 79. A more detailed account of his sufferings will be found in his letter to his cousin Conway, of August 7, 1760. See vol. iv. p. 81.

From what follows, it seems that the writer was induced from some civilities of Lady Yarmouth when he applied to her for a trifling favour, to present himself at Court. His apparent embarrassment was alleviated if not removed by a message from the Duke of York desiring that "as the acquaintance had began without restraint it might continue without ceremony." The incident, however, he made the most of, dilating upon it in some of his letters in a manner that shows, as we have already intimated, that with all his professions of republicanism he was particularly gratified with a courtier's pleasures. It was arranged that he should be presented. Lady Yarmouth was agreeable, Lord Bute obliging, and everything promised to render his new career as pleasant to him as possible, when his courtier-like prospects were suddenly extinguished by the death of George II.

In October 25, 1760, he writes :—

"I must tell you all I know of departed majesty. He went to bed well last night, rose at six this morning as usual, looked, I suppose, if all his money was in his purse, and called for his chocolate. A little after seven he went into the water-closet; the German *valet de chambre* heard a noise, listened, heard something like a groan, ran in and found the hero of Oudenarde and Dettingen on the floor, with a gash on his right temple, by falling against the corner of a bureau. He tried to speak, could not, and expired. Princess Emily was called, found him dead, and wrote to the Prince."

In a letter to Sir Horace Mann, Walpole enters into further details respecting the King's last moments.

"On the discovery of his situation," he writes "Lady Yarmouth was called, and sent for Princess Amelia, but they only told the

latter that the King was ill and wanted her. She had been confined some days with a rheumatism, but hurried down, ran into the room without further notice, and saw her father extended on the bed. She is very purblind and more than a little deaf. They had not closed his eyes; she bent down close to his face and concluded he spoke to her, though she could not hear him—guess what a shock when she found the truth."

His Majesty had had his warnings, but he had long been blind and deaf, morally as well as physically. We should be glad to have discovered some indications of repentance for past transgressions —some sense of shame for present follies, but George II. was always dull of perception regarding his own demerits, and as his mistress Lady Yarmouth was the first person called in after the catastrophe, it seems evident that the old age of the King had not been more respectable than his manhood.

Though his Majesty did not leave behind him a good name, he left other things which among the recipients were much more appreciated.

"King George the Second is dead, richer than Sir Robert Brown, though perhaps not so rich as my Lord Hardwicke. He has left fifty thousand pounds between the Duke, Emily, and Mary: the Duke has given up his share. To Lady Yarmouth, a cabinet with the contents; they call it eleven thousand pounds. By a German deed he gives the Duke the value of one hundred and eighty thousand pounds, placed on mortgages, not immediately recoverable. He had once given him twice as much more, then revoked it, and at last excused the revocation on the pretence of the expenses of the war: but owns that he was the best son that ever lived, and had never offended him—a pretty strong comment on the affair of Closterseven. He gives him, besides, all his jewels in England; but had removed all his best to Hanover, which he makes crown jewels, and his successor residuary legatee. The Duke, too, has some uncounted cabinets. My Lady Suffolk has

given me a particular of his jewels, which plainly amount to one hundred and fifty thousand pounds."*

In enumerating the grave deficiencies of this monarch, we must not forget that he had some good qualities, light though they are in comparison with his evil ones. We have dwelt the more on his unfavourable characteristics, influenced by that sense of justice which compels the honest historian to hold up to public reprobation all conduct in the Sovereign of a state, which may tend to lower the morality of the people placed by Providence under his government. His funeral seems to have been as little edifying as his life.

"I had the curiosity to go to the burying t'other night," writes Walpole. "I had never seen a royal funeral; nay I walked as a rag of quality, which I thought would be, and so it was, the easiest way of seeing it. It is absolutely a noble sight. The Prince's chamber, hung with purple, and a quantity of silver lamps, the coffin under a canopy of purple velvet, and six vast chandeliers of silver on high stands, had a very good effect. The Ambassador from Tripoli and his son, were carried to see that chamber. The procession through a line of foot-guards, every seventh man bearing a torch, the horse-guards lining the outside, their officers with drawn sabres and crape sashes on horseback, the drums muffled, the fifes [playing,] bells tolling, and minute guns.—All this was very solemn. But the charm was the entrance of the Abbey, were we were received by the Dean and Chapter in rich robes, the choir and almsmen bearing torches; the whole Abbey so illuminated, that one saw it to greater advantage than by day; the tombs, long aisles, and fretted roof, all appearing distinctly, and with the happiest *chiaro scuro*. There wanted nothing but incense, and little chapels here and there, with priests saying mass for the repose of the defunct; yet one could not complain of its not being Catholic enough. I had been in dread of being coupled with some boy of ten years old; but the heralds were

* "Walpole Letters." Vol. iv. p. 107.

not very accurate. and I walked with George Grenville, taller and older to keep me in countenance. When we came to the chapel of Henry VII. all solemnity and decorum ceased: no order was observed; people sat or stood where they could or would; the yeomen of the Guard were crying out for help, oppressed by the immense weight of the coffin; the Bishop read sadly, and blundered in the prayers; the fine chapter 'Man that is born of a Woman,' was chanted, not read; and the anthem, besides being immeasurably tedious, would have served as well for a nuptial.

"The real serious part was the figure of the Duke of Cumberland, heightened by a thousand melancholy circumstances. He had a dark brown Adonis, and a cloak of black cloth, with a train of five yards. Attending the funeral of a father could not be pleasant; his leg extremely bad, yet forced to stand upon it nearly two hours; his face bloated and distorted with his late paralytic stroke, which has affected, too, one of his eyes; and placed over the mouth of the vault, into which, in all probability, he must himself so soon descend: think how unpleasant a situation. He bore it all with a firm and unaffected countenance. This grave scene was fully contrasted by the burlesque Duke of Newcastle. He fell into a fit of crying the moment he came into the chapel, and flung himself back in the stall, the Archbishop hovering over him with a smelling bottle; but in two minutes, his curiosity got the better of his hypocrisy, and he ran about the chapel with his glass to spy who was or was not there, spying with one hand, and mopping his eyes with the other. Then returned from the fear of catching cold; and the Duke of Cumberland who was sinking with heat, felt himself weighed down, and turning round, found it was the Duke of Newcastle standing upon his train, to avoid the chill of the marble. It was very theatric to look down into the vault, where the coffin lay, attended by mourners with lights. Clavering, the groom of the bedchamber, refused to sit up with the body, and was dismissed by the King's order."*

So passed away from the scene the King who had had Sir Robert Walpole for a minister; and who, much to his credit, kept him for his minister as long as he was suffered to retain him in his service. His

* "Walpole Letters." Vol. iv. p. 110.

fidelity to him under many trying circumstances, forms a pleasing feature in a character that could boast of very few.

We are next informed that "the new reign dates with great propriety and decency; the civilest letter to Princess Emily; the greatest kindness to the Duke; the utmost respect to the dead body."

Horace Walpole was among the first allowed the honour of kissing the hand of the new sovereign, by whom, he says, he was very graciously received. Of course, under such circumstances, everything put on its most pleasing aspect to the somewhat too satirical lord of Strawberry Hill, and he acknowledged that there was great dignity and grace in the King's manner. Nevertheless, in a visit to Kensington on the 27th of October, he complains that nobody knew him, the attendants asked his name, and appeared as if they had never heard it before, and kept him waiting half an hour in a lodge with no other company than a footman.

A few days subsequently he says:—

"The young King has all the appearance of being amiable. There is great grace, to temper much dignity and extreme good nature, which breaks out on all occasions."

He adds, that the Archbishop entertained great hopes of him, and was never out of the Court circle,

"He seems all good nature," he writes, "and wishing to satisfy everybody; all his speeches are obliging. I saw him again yesterday, and was surprised to find the levée room had lost so entirely the air of the lion's den. The sovereign don't stand in one spot, with his eyes fixed royally on the ground, and dropping bits of German news."

This, of course refers to his predecessors.

"He walks about and speaks to everybody. I saw him afterwards on the throne, where he is graceful and genteel, sits with dignity, and reads his answers to addresses well."*

He further adds that the King "came to town and saw the Duke and the Privy Council. He was extremely kind to the first, and in general, has behaved with the greatest propriety, dignity, and decency. He read his speech to the council with much grace, and dismissed his own guards that they might wait on his grandfather's body."

Early in the year 1761, Walpole attended a performance of private theatricals, of which he wrote the following account:

"I was excessively amused on Tuesday night: there was a play at Holland House, acted by children—not all children, for Lady Sarah Lenox, and Lady Susan Strangways played the women. It was 'Jane Shore.' Mr. Price, Lord Barrington's nephew, was Glo'ster, and acted better than three parts of the comedians; Charles Fox, Hastings; a little Nichols, who spoke well, Belmour; Lord Ofaly, Lord Ashbroke, and other boys did the rest: but the two girls were delightful, and acted with so much nature and simplicity, that they appeared the very thing they represented. Lady Sarah was more beautiful than you can conceive, and her very awkwardness gave an air of truth to the shame of the part, and the antiquity of the time, which was kept up by her dress, taken out of Montfaucon. Lady Susan was dressed from Jane Seymour; and all the parts were clothed in ancient habits, and with the most minute propriety, I was infinitely more struck with the last scene between the two women, than ever I was when I have seen it on the stage. When Lady Sarah was in white, with her hair about her ears, and on the ground, no Magdalen by Correggio was half so lovely and expressive. You would have been charmed, too, with seeing Mr. Fox's little boy of six years old, who is beautiful, and acted the Bishop of Ely, dressed in lawn sleeves, and with a square cap; they

* "Walpole Letters." Vol. iv. p. 110.

had inserted two lines for him, which he could hardly speak plainly. Francis had given them a pretty prologue." *

One of the daughters of George II. still survived, and Walpole gives some amusing traits of her character.

"Princess Amelia is already sick of being familiar; she has been at Northumberland House, but goes to nobody more. That party was larger, but still more formal than the rest, though the Duke of York had invited himself and his commerce table. I played with Madam * * * *, and we were mighty well together; so well, that two nights after she commended me to Mr. Conway and Mr. Fox, but calling me *that Mr. Walpole*, they did not guess who she meant. For my part I thought it very well, that when I played with her, she did not call me *that gentleman*. As she went away, she thanked my Lady Northumberland, *like a parson's wife, for all her civilities.*"*

He appears about this time to have met her Royal Highness pretty frequently, and usually where high play was going on. On the 14th of May in the same year, he says—

"I came to town yesterday for a party at Bedford House, made for the Princess Amelia. The garden was open, with French horns and clarionets, and would have been charming with one single zephyr that had not come from the north-east. However, the young ladies found it delightful. There was limited loo for the Princess, unlimited loo for the Duchess of Grafton, to whom I belonged, a table of quinze, and another of quadrille. The Princess had heard of our having cold meat upon the loo table, and would have some. A table was brought in, she was served, so others rose by turns and went to the cold meat; in the outward room were four little tables for the rest of the company. Think, if King George II, could have risen and seen his daughter supping pell-mell with men, as it were in a booth. The tables were removed, the young people began to dance to a tabor and pipe; the princess

* "Walpole Letters." Vol. iv. p. 118.

sat down again, but to unlimited loo. We played till three, and I won enough to help on the gallery."*

Walpole never wanted subjects for his pen. Nothing in his career is more astonishing than the quantity and variety of literary labour he managed to get through. In his letters and in his memoirs, he chronicled every thing that took place within the circle of his observation, whether engaged in it or not; but when it happened that he was mixed up in any particular event, a separate relation at full length was sure to be carefully prepared. In this way he produced his "Reply" to Drs. Milles and Masters' observations on the "Historic Doubts"—his various papers respecting the Chatterton controversy—his "Narrative of the Quarrel of Hume and Rousseau"—his "Counter Address to the Public on the Dismission of General Conway"—the account of his conduct relative to the places he held under Government, and towards Ministers—and his detection of a late forgery called "Testament Politique du Chevalier Robert Walpoole." As if to afford him a little variety, he wrote the "Life of the Rev. Thomas Baker"—a "Description of the Villa at Strawberry Hill, with Illustrations"—"Thoughts on Comedy and Tragedy"—a one act play, called "Nature will Prevail"—"Hieroglyphic Tales," after the fashion of "The Arabian Nights,"—"A Parody on Lord Chesterfield's Letters to his Son,"—and poems, epigrams, prologues, and other such trifles, almost out of number.

During one of Walpole's brief visits to town, there

* "Walpole Letters." Vol. iv. p. 143.

happened a dreadful catastrophe. A coachman had carried a lighted candle into the stable adjoining his master's house, near Sackville street, stuck it against the rack, and having left it insecure, it fell among the straw and caused a conflagration in which eight or nine horses and fourteen houses were consumed. The following passage, in a letter to Mr. Montagu, dated April 28, 1760, describes this lamentable fire, of which the writer was not only a spectator, but was no doubt among those gentlemen who so kindly assisted, with their servants, according to the newspaper accounts, in forming a ring to keep off the mob, and then handed the property rescued from the burning houses from one to another, till it could be lodged in a place of safety.

"There has been a terrible fire in the little transverse street at the upper end of Sackville Street. Last Friday night, between eleven and twelve, I was sitting with Lord Digby in the coffee-room at Arthur's; they told us there was a great fire somewhere about Burlington Gardens. I, who am as constant at a fire as George Selwyn at an execution, proposed to Lord Digby to go and see where it was. We found it within two doors of that pretty house of Fairfax, now General Waldegrave's. I sent for the latter who was at Arthur's; and for the guard, from St. James's. Four houses were in flames before they could find a drop of water; eight were burnt. I went to my Lady Suffolk in Saville Row, and passed the whole night, till three in the morning, between her little hot bedchamber and the spot, up to my ancles in water, without catching cold. As the wind, which had set towards Swallow Street, changed in the middle of the conflagration, I concluded the greatest part of Saville Row would be consumed. I persuaded her to prepare to transport her most valuable effects, "*portantur avari Pygmalionis opes miserœ.*". She behaved with great composure, and observed to me herself, how much worse her deafness grew with the alarm. Half the people of fashion in town were in the streets all night, as it

happened in such a quarter of distinction. In the crowd, looking on with great tranquillity, I saw a Mr. Jackson, an Irish gentleman, with whom I had dined this winter at Lord Hertford's. He seemed rather grave; I said 'Sir, I hope you do not live hereabouts.' 'Yes, Sir,' said he, 'I lodged in that house that is just burned.'" *

This was quite an incident in Walpole's life, and served him for a subject of conversation for at least the legitimate number of days that go to a wonder. Shortly afterwards he was obliged to return to the less combustible neighbourhood of Twickenham, and in the various employments his Gothic castle afforded found more pleasing excitements than those of the night he had passed in Sackville Street up to his ancles in water.

But before we convey him back to the place with which his reputation is so indissolubly connected, we must be permitted to take the reader in very good company, on a visit to the Cock Lane Ghost.

On February 2, 1762, Walpole writes:—

"I could send you volumes on the ghost, and I believe if I were to stay a little, I might send its life, dedicated to my Lord Dartmouth, by the Ordinary of Newgate, its two great patrons. A drunken parish clerk set it on foot out of revenge; the Methodists have adopted it, and the whole town of London think of nothing else. Elizabeth Canning and the Rabbit Woman are modest impostors in comparison of this, which goes on without saving the least appearances. The Archbishop who would not suffer 'The Minor' to be acted in ridicule of the Methodists, permits this farce to be played every night, and I shall not be surprised if they perform it in the great hall at Lambeth. I went to hear it, for it is not an *apparition* but an *audition*. We set out for the Opera, changed our clothes at Northumberland House, the Duke of York, Lady Northumberland, Lady Mary Coke, Lord Hertford, and I, all

* "Walpole Letters." Vol. iv. p. 138.

in one hackney coach, and drove to the spot. It rained torrents, yet the lane was full of mob, and the house so full we could not get in; at last they discovered it was the Duke of York, and the company squeezed themselves into one another's pockets to make room for us. The house which is borrowed, and to which the ghost has adjourned, is wretchedly small and miserable; when we opened the chamber, in which were fifty people, with no light but one tallow-candle at the end, we tumbled over the bed of the child to whom the ghost comes, and whom they are murdering by inches in such insufferable heat and stench. At the top of the room are ropes to dry clothes. I asked if we were to have rope dancing between the acts? We had nothing. They told us as they would at a puppet-show, that it would not come that night till seven in the morning; that is, when there are only 'prentices and old women. We stayed however, till half-an-hour after one. The Methodists have promised them contributions; provisions are sent in like forage, and all the taverns and all houses in the neighbourhood make fortunes. The most diverting part is to hear people wondering when it will be found out, as if there was anything to find out, as if the actors would make their noises when they can be discovered."*

Strawberry Hill had now grown so famous, that the highest personages in the realm were anxious to obtain a sight of its wonders, and it will be seen from the next quotation that admirer as Walpole was of the *Major Charta*, he was shocked when he learned one day on getting up a little later than usual, that royalty had been turned away from his doors.

In August 3, 1764, he writes :—

"I have been much distressed this morning. The Royal Family reside chiefly at Richmond, whither scarce necessary servants attend them, and no mortal else but Lord Bute. The King and Queen have taken to going about to see places; they have been at Oatlands and Wanstead. A quarter before ten to-day, I heard the bell at the gate ring; truth is, I was not up, for my hours are not reformed, either at night or in the morning. I inquired who it was.

* "Walpole Letters." Vol. iv. p. 204.

The Prince of Mecklenburg and De Witz had called to know if they could see the house My two Swiss, Favre and Louis, told them I was in bed, but if they would call again in an hour, they might see it. I shuddered at this report; and would it were the worst part. The Queen herself was behind in a coach. I am shocked to death, and know not what to do. It is ten times worse just now than even at any other time; it will certainly be said that I refused to let the Queen see my house. See what it is to have republican servants. When I made a tempest about it, Favre said 'Why could not he tell me he was the Prince of Mecklenburgh?' I shall go this evening and consult my oracle, Lady Suffolk. If she approves it, I will write to De Witz, and pretend I know nothing of anybody but the Prince, and beg a thousand pardons, and assure him how proud I should be to have his master visit my castle of Thunderdentronk."

It was a long time before Walpole got over this shock to his courtly propriety; but in due time he had plenty of such visitors; almost every member of the royal family having been pleased to honour the Gothic Castle with his or her presence.

Whilst Walpole was building, whilst he was planting, furnishing, hunting auctions, giving commissions to dealers, and collecting objects of art and *virtù* with which to furnish his new residence, there was interest in the pursuit, and there is no doubt that at first he felt no small gratification at the effect his labours and disbursements made on the public mind. But the subject is diminishing in attraction; the Lord of Strawberry begins to entertain misgivings that he has been unwise to lavish so much time and means in making such a display; and he arrives at the conclusion that all he has done is for the benefit of others rather than for himself. Strawberry Hill is so much admired by the public, that the public are

never out of Strawberry Hill, and the owner is forced to skulk into some out of the way corner that he may escape the crowds of the curious who besiege his apartments.

It is curious to trace in the course of a few months the change in his feelings with respect to the popularity he has brought upon himself.

In the summer of 1763 we find him acknowledging his fears that he had been doing too much.

"I begin to be ashamed of my magnificence. Strawberry is growing sumptuous in its latter day; it will scarcely be any longer like the fruit of its name, or the modesty of its ancient demeanour, both which seem to have been in Spenser's prophetic eye, when he sung of

'The blushing strawberries,
Which lurk, close shrouded from high-looking eyes,
Showing that sweetness low and hidden lies.'

In truth, my collection was too great already to be lodged humbly; it has extended my walls, and pomp followed. It was a neat, small house, it now will be a comfortable one, and, except one fine apartment, does not deviate from its simplicity."*

This prospect of comfort diminished very much in the course of the next two months, for at the commencement of September, we meet with the following complaint.

"My house is full of people, and has been so from the instant I breakfasted, and more are coming; in short, I keep an inn; the sign 'The Gothic Castle.' Since my gallery was finished, I have not been in it a quarter of an hour together; my whole time is passed in giving tickets for seeing it, and hiding myself while it is seen. Take my advice," he adds to his friend, "never build a charming house for yourself between London and Hampton Court; everybody will live in it but you."†

* "Walpole Letters," Vol. iv. p. 285.
† Ibid. p. 297.

Very shortly afterwards he complains of not being allowed to see his own house for the strangers that are incessantly applying for admission. However, though he met with some discomfort, there was a brighter side to the picture, which he has not forgotten to chronicle. It is clear that he did not hide himself from all his visitors.

At Strawberry Hill Lady Suffolk was regarded as an oracle, and treated with the greatest consideration. This treatment she repaid by being extremely communicative, and rendering herself as amiable as possible. She also possessed considerable talent, which she occasionally displayed for the amusement of her friends. As she grew older, she seemed to become more amiable, and evidently omitted nothing that could recommend her to such a friend as Horace Walpole.

In January, 1764, after giving some verses written apparently for the amusement of a child, in the form of a fairy entertainment, Walpole writes :—

"The whole plan and execution of the second act was laid and adjusted by Lady Suffolk herself, and Will. Chetwynd, Master of the Mint, Lord Bolingbroke's Oronooko-Chetwynd; he four score, she past seventy-six; and, what is more, much worse than I was for, added to her deafness, she has been confined these three weeks with the gout in her eyes. and was actually then in misery, and had been without sleep. What spirits and cleverness, and imagination at that age, and under those afflicting circumstances! You reconnoitre her old Court knowledge; how charmingly she has applied it. Do you wonder I pass so many hours and evenings with her? Alas! I had like to have lost her this morning! They had poulticed her feet to draw the gout downwards, and began to succeed yesterday, but to-day it flew up into her head, and she was almost in convulsions with the agony, and screamed dreadfully;

proof enough how ill she was, for her patience and good breeding makes her for ever sink and conceal what she feels. This evening the gout has been driven back to her foot, and I trust she is out of danger."*

Lady Suffolk had become a great sufferer from the gout, and her health began to be sensibly affected by its ravages. In the summer of 1767 her case became hopeless. Under the date of July 29 of that year, Horace Walpole communicates to the Earl of Strafford the particulars of her decease, which he describes as "an essential loss," by which he was deprived of a most agreeable friend, with whom he had passed many happy hours. He had visited her a short time previously, and though aware of a change, had not apprehended danger. She died the next day without any apparent pain. He adds:—

"It is due to her memory to say, that I never knew more strict honour and justice. She bore *knowingly* the imputation of being covetous at a time that the strictest economy could by no means prevent her exceeding her income considerably. The anguish of the last years of her life, though concealed, flowed from the apprehension of not satisfying her few wishes, which were not to be in debt, and to make a provision for Miss Hotham.†"

This young lady was her great niece, and had lived with her at Marble Hill. In conclusion, Walpole says:—

"In truth I never knew a woman more respectable for her honour and principles, and have lost few persons in my life whom I shall miss so much."

Thus perished one who had sacrificed "honour

* "Walpole Letters." Vol. iv. p 345

† Ibid. Vol. v. p. 178.

and principles" for the possession of Court influence, which, when gained, availed her nothing in her bad eminence for her friends, and gained her but a royal lover, who became indifferent even sooner than he had become enamoured.* Her fate excited a lively interest in one whose character and fortunes bore many points of similarity.

"Votre pauvre sourde," writes Madame du Deffand to their mutual friend; "ah, mon Dieu! que j'en suis fâchée; c'est une veritable perte, et je la partage; j'aimais qu'elle vécut: j'aimais son amitié pour vous; j'aimais votre attachement pour elle; tout cela, ce me semble, m'était bon."†

The entertainment Walpole provided for the ambassadors, in June of the same year, must have formed a rustic scene worthy of the pencil of the courtly Watteau.

"Strawberry whose glories verge towards their setting, has been more sumptuous to-day than ordinary, and banquetted their representative Majesties of France and Spain. I had M. and Madame de Guerchy, Mademoiselle de Nangis, their daughter, two other French gentlemen, the Prince of Masserano, his brother, and secretary, Lord March, George Selwyn, Mrs. Ann Pitt, and my niece Waldegrave. The refectory never was so crowded, nor have any foreigners been here before that comprehended Strawberry. Indeed everything succeeded to a hair. A violent shower in the morning laid the dust, brightened the green, refreshed the roses, pinks, orange flowers, and the blossoms with which the acacias are covered. A rich storm of thunder and lightning gave a dignity of

* Two days before George II. died, Lady Suffolk went to pay a visit to Kensington, unaware of there being a review in the neighbourhood; she found herself hemmed in by coaches, and was close to him, whom she had not seen for many years, and to Lady Yarmouth, but they did not know her. This affected her very much. "Walpole Letters." Vol. iv. p. 108.

† Madame du Deffand's Letters.

colouring to the heavens; and the sun appeared enough to illuminate the landscape, without basking himself over it at his length. During dinner there were French horns and clarionets in the cloister, and after coffee I treated them with an English, and to them a very new collation—a syllabub milked under the cows that were brought to the brow of the terrace. Thence they went to the printing-house, and saw a new fashionable French song printed. They drank tea in the gallery, and at eight went away to Vauxhall. They really seemed quite pleased with the place and the day; but I must tell you the treasury of the abbey will feel it, for without magnificence, all was handsomely done. I must keep maigre; at least till the interdict is taken off from my convent. I have kings and queens I hear in my neighbourhood, but this is no royal foundation. Adieu. Your poor beadman,

"THE ABBOT OF STRAWBERRY."*

Walpole, much as he loved the magnificence of his gothic mansion, was not disposed to pass all his life there; he chose to mingle with the gay world without its walls, where it is evident he was in great requisition. Writing in the month of June, 1765, to Lady Hervey, he thus describes the manner in which he was in the habit of passing his day:—

"My resolutions of growing old and staid are admirable. I wake with a sober plan, and intend to pass the day with my friends—then comes the Duke of Richmond and hurries me down to Whitehall to dinner—then the Duchess of Grafton sends for me to loo in Upper Grosvenor Street—before I can get thither, I am begged to step to Kensington to give Mrs. Ann Pitt my opinion about a bow window; after the loo I am to march back to Whitehall to supper—and after that am to walk with Miss Pelham on the terrace till two in the morning, because it is moonlight, and her chair is not come. All this does not help my morning laziness; and by the time I have breakfasted, fed my birds and my squirrels and dressed, there is an auction ready. In short, madam, this was

* "Walpole Letters," Vol iv. p. 429.

my life last week, and is I think every week, with the addition of forty episodes."*

Nothing pleased Walpole better than this elaborate idleness. There are many indications in his letters that he experienced as much enjoyment in affecting to be idle, as he did at other times in affecting to be industrious. He took some trouble to assure his friends what a deal of nothing he could get through — being quite as ostentatious in his method of wasting his time, as at other times he had been in his endeavours to make the most of it. But it was ordained that a change should come over his dream. A sharp fit of the gout enforced an abandonment of such gaieties—enforced, too, a train of serious reflection which presented him with a prospect by no means alluring, and which he seemed to regard with anything rather than satisfaction.

"I am tired of the world; its politics, its pursuits, and its pleasures," he says, for the hundredth time; "but it will cost me some struggles before I submit to be tender and careful. Can I ever stoop to the regimen of old age. I do not wish to dress up a withered person, nor drag it about to public places; but to sit in one's room, warmly clothed, expecting visits from folks I don't wish to see, and tended and flattered by relations impatient for one's death: let the gout do its worst as expeditiously as it can, it would be more welcome in my stomach than in my limbs. I am not made to bear a course of nonsense and advice, but must play the fool in my own way to the last, alone with all my heart, if I cannot be with the very few I wish to see: but to depend for comfort on others, who would be no comfort to me—this surely is not a state to be preferred to death—and nobody can have truly enjoyed the advantages of youth, health, and spirits, who is content

* "Walpole Letters." Vol. v. p. 46.

to exist without the two last, which alone bear any resemblance to the first."*

An able critic, commenting on this passage, says:

"Walpole's reflections on human life are marked by strong sense and knowledge of mankind; but our most useful lessons will perhaps be derived from considering this man of the world, full of information and sparkling with vivacity, stretched on a sick bed, and apprehending all the tedious languor of helpless decrepitude and deserted solitude.'"†

We once more find Walpole in the train of the Princess Amelia, with whom he was again in favour, in the summer of 1770, for he informs his friend George Montagu that she had insisted on his meeting her at Stowe. "She mentioned it to me some time ago, and I thought I had parried it; but having been with her at Park Place these two or three days, she has commanded it so positively that I could not refuse." He adds, after another line or two, "Don't take me for a Lauzun, and think all this favour portends a second marriage between our family and the blood-royal." He afterwards says of the party: "A Princess at the head of a very small set for five days together, did not promise well. However, she was very good-humoured and easy, and dispensed with a large quantity of etiquette." One would suppose, from the description given, they were not a very lively group. "The Earl, you know, is bent double, the Countess very lame. I am a miserable walker, and the Princess, though as strong as a Brunswick lion, makes no figure in going down fifty

* "Walpole Letters." Vol. v. p. 55.

† "Quarterly Review." Vol. xix. p. 129.

stone stairs." * Lord Temple erected an arch in his grounds, in honour of his royal visitor; the Princess was greatly delighted with the compliment, and not less so with a copy of verses which Walpole had written for the occasion. He, however, got tired of the whole thing, and complained to one of his correspondents that he should die of the gout or fatigue, were he obliged to be the Polonius of the Princess for another week.

Of all the royal personages who paid visits to the Twickenham castle, the hero of Culloden was the least popular with its owner; nevertheless his royal Highness was received with all the honours due to his rank, and his visit is thus chronicled:—

"What will you say to greater honour which Strawberry has received? Nolkejumskoi† has been to see it, and liked the windows and staircase; I can't conceive how he entered it. I should have figured him like Gulliver cutting down some of the largest oaks in Windsor Forest to make joint stools, in order to straddle over the battlements and peep in at the windows of Lilliput."‡

The battlements, it must be confessed, were rather Lilliputian; they lasted so brief a period, that one of his friends used to say that Walpole had outlived five sets of them. The Duke of Cumberland, at this period, was somewhat bulky in appearance, and judging by the lath-and-plaster construction of the building, was a kind of Gulliver very likely by his tread to test the strength of its foundation.

On the 6th of January, 1772, Strawberry Hill

* "Walpole Letters." Vol. v. p. 274.

† A nick-name applied by Walpole to the Duke of Cumberland

‡ "Walpole Letters." Vol. iii. p. 37.

narrowly escaped being levelled to the ground. Three powder-mills blew up on Hounslow Heath, and the concussion was so great as to be felt as far as Gloucester: it was generally attributed to an earthquake. The damage done to Walpole's gothic castle is described by its lord as comprising eight of the painted glass windows, whilst the north side looked as if it had stood a siege. Two saints in the hall had their bodies blown away from their heads: nevertheless, it is added that the mischief was much less than might have been expected; the proprietor, remembering the legend of St. Denis, possibly thought this division of the saints a casualty that was scarcely worth mentioning.

It was fortunate that Hounslow was not nearer to Twickenham, or the whole edifice, together with its museum, would have tumbled into an inextricable chaos. But the greatest loss to the public would have been its proprietor—for Strawberry Hill is not to be classed among those marvels of architecture that are impossible of successful imitation—and although its contents comprised some remarkable things, several collections have been formed since his time, which have far exceeded it in value: but the loss of Walpole himself would have been irremediable—there never could be two Horaces after the fashion of the Lord of Strawberry.

Horace Walpole always preserved a delicacy of figure approaching effeminacy: his dress was simple: his manners studiously courteous: but his features, though agreeable, were not handsome; the most expressive portion being his eyes, which, when animated

in conversation, flashed with intelligence. A close observer has stated, that "his laugh was forced and uncouth, and even his smile not the most pleasing." * This may, perhaps, be attributed to the pain he habitually suffered, since the age of twenty-five, from the gout, which in the latter part of his life attacked his hands and feet with great severity. During the last half of his existence he was not only extremely abstemious, but his habits indicated a constitution that could brave alterations of temperature, from which much stronger men would shrink.

His hour of rising was usually nine, and then, preceded by his favourite little dog, which was sure to be as plump as idleness and good feeding could render it, he entered the breakfast-room. The dog took his place beside him on the sofa. From the silver tea-kettle, kept at an even temperature by the lamp beneath, he poured into a cup of the rarest Japan porcelain, the beverage "that cheers, but not inebriates." This was replenished two or three times, whilst he broke his fast on the finest bread and the sweetest butter that could be obtained. He, at the same time, fed his four-footed favorite, and then, mixing a bason of bread and milk, he opened the window and threw it out to the squirrels, who instantly sprang from bough to bough in the neighbouring trees, and then bounded along the ground to their meal.

At dinner, which was usually about four o'clock, he ate moderately of the lightest food, quenching his thirst from a decanter of water that stood in an ice-

* Pinkerton's Biographical sketch to "Walpoliana."

pail under the table. Coffee was served almost immediately, to which he proceeded up stairs, as he dined in the small parlour or large dining-room, according to the number of his guests. He would take his seat on the sofa, and amuse the company with a current of lively gossip and scandal, relieved with observations on books and art, in illustration of objects brought from the library or any other portion of the house—for the whole might be regarded as a museum. His snuff-box, filled from a canister of *tabac d'etrennes* from Fribourg's, placed in a marble urn at one of the windows to keep it moist, was handed round, and he frequently enjoyed its pungent fragrance till his guests had departed—this was rarely till about two o'clock. If earlier, Walpole was sure to be found with pen in hand, continuing whatever work he might have in progress, or communicating to some of his numerous friends the news and gossip of the day.

The whole of the forenoon, till dinner-time, was often employed by him in attending upon visitors, rambling about the grounds, or taking excursions upon the river. He rarely wore a hat, his throat was generally exposed, and he was quite regardless of the dew, replying, to the earnest solicitude of his friends, "My back is the same with my face, and my neck is like my nose."

Sometimes of an evening he would go out to pay a visit to his neighbour, Kitty Clive, and then the hours passed by in a rivalry of anecdote and pleasantry; for Kitty, like himself, had seen a great deal of the world, and was full of its recollections.

CHAPTER X.

HORACE WALPOLE AS POLITICIAN.

"The period which elapsed between the fall of Sir Robert Walpole and the reign of George the Third," writes one of the most distinguished of our political leaders, "was the age of small factions. The great Whig party, having had from the accession of the House of Hanover complete possession of power, broke into many little sections, divided from each other by personal predilections, and not by distinct lines of policy. Thus their quarrels and their friendships were precarious and capricious: there was no reason why any one statesman should not join with any other statesman to whom he had been the week before most opposed; nor, to say the truth, was there any great question in dispute, like the revolution settlement, or the American war, or the French war, upon which parties widely separated in opinion could take their stand. The cohesion of politicians, thus loose and slight, became the sport of secret intrigue, of interested cabal, of sudden resentments and dis-

cordant tempers. Had the character of Mr. Pitt been more conciliatory, his great qualities might have rallied around him a national party."*

But though the factions that existed may have generally been insignificant, they occasionally produced men of great ability, and sometimes gave indications of extraordinary talent in public business. Horace Walpole was in the midst of these small factions, and very frequently was, when not at the top, at the bottom of them. In 1751 he moved the address, and seemed to be putting himself forward in the parliamentary arena. He has left us admirable portraits of men of all parties, and we are enabled in a great measure to learn the history of the times by tracing his footsteps in their political movements. One or two of Walpole's portraits will prove how close and interested an observer he was of what was going on around him. We find him chronicling the début of a public speaker in 1755, whose subsequent reputation was based exclusively on the one display of talent, from which he acquired the name of Single-speech Hamilton.

"Then there was a young Mr. Hamilton who spoke for the first time, and was at once perfection: his speech was set and full of antithesis, and those antitheses were full of argument; indeed his speech was the most argumentative of the whole day, and he broke through the regularity of his own composition, answered other people, and fell into his own track again with the greatest ease. His

* "Correspondence of John, Fourth Duke of Bedford." Selected from the originals, at Woburn Abbey. With an Introduction. By Lord John Russell, vol. iii.

figure is advantageous; his voice strong and clear, his manner spirited, and the whole with the ease of an established speaker."*

Walpole then proceeds to describe an orator, whose reputation was based on a hundred similar displays—

"You will ask what could be beyond this? Nothing, but what was beyond what ever was, and that was Pitt. He spoke at past one, for an hour and thirty-five minutes: there was more humour, wit, vivacity, finer language, more boldness, in short, more astonishing perfections than even you, who are used to him, can conceive. He was not abusive, yet very attacking on all sides: he ridiculed my Lord Hillsborough, crushed poor Sir George, terrified the attorney, lashed my Lord Granville, painted my Lord of Newcastle, attacked Mr. Fox, and even hinted up to the Duke."†

In another place he says—

"Pitt surpassed himself, and then I need not tell you that he surpassed Cicero and Demosthenes. What a figure would they, with their formal laboured cabinet orations, make *vis-à-vis* his manly vivacity and dashing eloquence at one o'clock in the morning, after sitting in that heat for eleven hours. He spoke above an hour and a half, with scarce a bad sentence: the most admired part was a comparison he drew of the two parts of the new administration—to the conflux of the Rhone and the Saone."

This debate the reader will find duly reported by the writer, with the other proceedings of the session of 1755,‡ but we refer to the more lively accounts which Walpole wrote at the same time to his friends. In one of these, of the date of December 17, 1755, alluding to a letter he had received from Mr. Bentley, he says:—

* "Walpole-Letters." Vol. iii. p. 171. † Ibid. p. 173.
‡ "Walpole's Memoirs of George II.

"I never heard as much wit, except in a speech with which Mr. Pitt concluded the debate t'other day on the treaties. His antagonists endeavour to disarm him, but as fast as they deprive him of one weapon, he finds a better: I never suspected him of such an universal armoury—I knew he had a Gorgon's head, composed of bayonets and pistols, but little thought that he could tickle to death with a feather. On the first debate on these famous treaties, last Wednesday, Hume Campbell, whom the Duke of Newcastle had retained as the most abusive counsel he could find against Pitt (and hereafter perhaps against Fox) attacked the former for eternal invectives. Oh, since the last Philippic of Billingsgate memory, you never heard such an invective as Pitt returned—Hume Campbell was annihilated! Pitt, like an angry wasp, seems to have left his sting in the wound, and has since assumed a style of delicate ridicule and repartee. But think how charming a ridicule must that be that lasts and rises flash after flash, for an hour and a half! Some day or other, perhaps, you will see some of the glittering splinters that I gathered up. I have written under his print these lines, which are not only full as just as the original, but have not the tautology of loftiness and majesty:—

"Three orators in distant ages born,
Greece, Italy, and England did adorn;
The first in loftiness of thought surpassed,
The next in language, but in both the last:
The power of nature could no farther go;
To make a third, she joined the former two."*

In 1756 Horace again put himself forward as a debater by making a speech on employing Swiss regiments,† but without producing any particular effect. There were however few whose eloquence could be expected to produce any very brilliant display, when the Bude light of Pitt was illumining a whole nation.

* "Walpole Letters" Vol. iii. p. 179.

† See "Walpole's Memoirs of George II." Vol. ii.

The reader must now prepare for a change of scene, as well as of characters, for the purpose of introducing at full length that still very busy but still very feeble statesman, the Duke of Newcastle.

"April 26, 1759. The ball at Bedford House on Monday was very numerous and magnificent. The two princes were there, deep at hazard; and the Dutch deputies, who are a proverb for their dulness: they have brought with them a young Dutchman, who is the richest man of Amsterdam. I am amazed Mr. Yorke* has not married him. But the delightful part of the night was the appearance of the Duke of Newcastle, who is veering round again, as it is time to betray Mr. Pitt. The Duchess [of Bedford] was at the upper end of the gallery; and though some of the Pelham court were there too, yet they showed so little cordiality to this revival of connection, that Newcastle had nobody to attend him but Sir Edward Montagu, who kept pushing him all up the gallery. From thence he went into the hazard room, and wriggled and shuffled and lisped, and winked and spied, till he got behind the Duke of Cumberland, the Duke of Bedford and Rigby; the first of whom did not deign to notice him; but he must come to it. You would have died to see Newcastle's pitiful and distressed figure: nobody went near him. He tried to flatter people that were too busy to mind him: in short, he was quite disconcerted. His treachery used to be so sheathed in folly, that he was never out of countenance. But it is plain he grows old. To finish his confusion and anxiety, George Selwyn, Brand, and I, went and stood near him, and in half whispers, that he might hear, said, 'Lord, how he is broke! How old he looks!' Then I said, 'This room feels very cold: I believe there never is a fire in it.' Presently afterwards I said, 'Well, I'll not stay here; this room has been washed to-day.' In short, I believe we made him take a double dose of Gascoigne's powder, when he went home."†

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* This is the gentleman who acquired the title of "The Solicitor-General," from the multiplicity of his suits to heiresses.

† "Walpole Letters." Vol. iii. p. 444.

But among the political Sir Forcible Feebles of the time, the most conspicuous was Lord Bute, the favourite of the Dowager Princess, and for a long time the secret counsellor of the King. About the beginning of the year 1762, Walpole sent a copy of his Anecdotes of Painting to the Earl, from whom he shortly received the following acknowledgment.

"Lord Bute presents his compliments to Mr. Walpole, and returns him a thousand thanks for the very agreeable present he has made him. In looking over it, Lord Bute observes Mr. Walpole has mixed several curious remarks on the customs, &c. of the times he treats of,—a thing much wanted, and that has never yet been executed, except in part by Peck, &c. Such a general work would be not only very agreeable, but instructive. The French have attempted it; the Russians are about it; and Lord Bute has been informed Mr. Walpole is well furnished with materials for such a noble work."

This communication appears to have made an unusual impression upon Walpole's mind, and to have created some extraordinary speculations. He regarded it as a command from the King to undertake a work similar to Montfaucon's "Monumens de la Monarchie Française," and wrote to some of his friends, announcing the honour thus conferred upon upon him. In reply Gray said—

"I rejoice in the good disposition of our court, and in the propriety of their application. The work is a thing so much to be wished, has so near a connection with the turn of your studies and of your curiosity, and might find such ample materials among your hoards and in your head, that it will be a sin if you let it drop and come to nothing, or worse than nothing, for want of your assistance. The historical part should be in the manner of Hénault, a mere

abridgment; a series of facts selected with judgment, that may serve as a clue to lead the mind along in the midst of those ruins and scattered monuments of art that time has spared. This would be sufficient, and better than Montfauçon's more diffuse narrative." *

Walpole seems to have lost no time in communicating again with the King's favourite, on what he believed to be the King's suggestion. On the 15th of February he wrote a long letter to his Lordship, wherein after a few well-turned compliments, and after stating that the expense of the proposed undertaking would be beyond his fortune, he thus offers his services.

"But, my Lord, if his Majesty was pleased to command such a work, on so laudable an idea as your Lordship's, nobody would be more ready than myself to give his assistance. I own I think I could be of use in it, in collecting or pointing out materials; and I would readily take any trouble in aiding, supervising, or directing such a plan. Pardon me, my Lord, if I offer no more: I mean, that I do not undertake the part of composition. I have already trespassed too much upon the indulgence of the public; I wish not to disgust them with hearing of me, and reading me. It is time for me to have done; and when I shall have completed, as I almost have, the history of the arts on which I am now engaged, I did not purpose to tempt again the patience of mankind. But the case is very different with regard to my trouble. My whole fortune is from the bounty of the Crown, and from the public: it would ill become me to spare any pains for the King's glory, or for the honour and satisfaction of my country. And give me leave to add, my

* Gray's Works. Vol. iii. p. 293. On Feb. 24 he wrote to Dr. Ducarel: "Your thought of an English Montfauçon accords perfectly with a design I have long had of attempting something of that kind, in which too I have been lately encouraged."

Lord, it would be an ungrateful return for the distinction with which your Lordship has condescended, if I withheld such trifling as mine, when it might in the least tend to adorn your Lordship's administration. From me, my Lord, permit me to say these are not words of course, or of compliment; this is not the language of flattery. Your Lordship knows I have no views—perhaps knows that, insignificant as it is, my praise is never detached from my esteem; and when you have raised, as I trust you will, real monuments of glory, the most contemptible characters in the inscription dedicated by your country, may not be the testimony of, my Lord," &c. &c.*

This may be regarded as the least creditable of the writer's numerous compositions. He appears throughout its elaborate humility and formal insincerity, to be struggling with the prejudices that had caused him to pen those satirical allusions and caustic comments which he had coupled with the name of the King's favourite. The idea of writing the work which he assumed that Lord Bute had suggested, had entirely taken possession of his mind. A large memorandum book was procured, and headed with the following title—

"Collections for a History of the Manners, Customs, Habits, Fashions, Ceremonies, &c. of England, begun February 21, 1762, by Horace Walpole."

But there the great work began and ended. Neither the King nor the Minister chose to encourage Mr. Walpole to advance another step, and after waiting a couple of years, in expectation of receiving

* "Walpole Letters." Vol. iv. p. 209. "Lord Orford's Works." Vol. v. p. 400.

some further communication from the Court, he tells us that he abandoned the undertaking. On February 23, 1764, he says—"I flattered myself that this reign would have given new life and views to the artists and the curious. I am disappointed: politics on one hand, and want of taste in those about his Majesty on the other, have prevented my expectations from being answered.*

Fox knowing that the name of Walpole was still a tower of strength, and that Horace had influence in a certain circle, thought, about the year 1762, that it would be worth while to obtain him as an ally. There had been some degree of intimacy between them, and Fox, when he joined the Duke of Newcastle, had made a proposition to Walpole to bribe him into a friendlier feeling towards the Duke, with the offer that the place he held only for his brother's life should be held for his own; but Walpole's detestation of his grace was not so easily overcome, and his reply was, "I will not accept that reversion from the Duke."† Walpole had also declared to Lord Bute that he would receive no favour from the Court. Nevertheless, some civilities that had been offered him at the King's accession—a sense of gratification at seeing a new administration—and a desire for peace, which, however, did not amount to approval of the conditions on which it had been obtained, kept him from voting against the preliminaries,

* "Walpole Letters." Vol. iv. p. 379.

† "Walpole Memoirs of the Reign of George III." Vol. i. p. 211.

though too much an Englishman, as he says, to vote for them; so he had left the House before the division. This conduct made Fox conclude that he disapproved of the treaty, and knowing that he was in some measure dependent on his nephew Lord Orford for his seat (Lynn), and was still more dependent on the Treasury for the payments of his place of Usher of the Exchequer, Fox wrote him the following letter:—

"Dear Sir, November 21, 1762.

"As soon as I heard that the Parks (the Rangership of St. James's and Hyde Parks), which Lord Ashburnham had quitted, were worth 2,200*l.* (as they certainly are),* I thought such an income might, if not prevent, at least procrastinate your nephew's ruin. I find nobody knows his lordship's thoughts on the present state of politics. Perhaps he has none.

"Now are you willing, and are you the proper person, to tell Lord Orford that I will do my best to procure this employment for him, if I can soon learn that he desires it? If he does choose it, I doubt not of his and his friend Boone's† hearty assistance, and believe me I hope I shall see you too, much oftener, in the Commons. This is offering you a bribe, but 'tis such a one as one House of honest, good-natured man may, without offence, offer to another.

"If you undertake this, do it immediately, and have attention to my part in it, which is delicate. If you do not undertake it, let me know your thoughts of the proposal, whether I had better drop it entirely, or put it into other hands, and whose.

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* This was a mistake. Lord Ashburnham received that sum for the Rangership and the post of Lord of the Bedchamber, but as Lord Orford already held the latter distinction, it could not make that addition to his income.

† Charles Boone, member for Castle Rising.

"You'll believe me, when I tell you that goodness of heart has as much share in this to the full as policy.

"Yours ever,
"H. Fox."

George, grandson of Sir Robert Walpole, who succeeded, as third Earl of Orford, to the estates of the family, had also succeeded to his father's and grandfather's debts—a mass of liability which ought to have satisfied him, but did not. He chose to add to it considerably: instead of improving his patrimony at Houghton, he kept wasting it at Newmarket. Insensibility and insincerity were his chief faults; his chief recommendations, a most engaging figure and address. The latter qualities possibly obtained for his lordship the post of Lord of the Bedchamber: and it seems his being on the brink of ruin formed his qualifications for the Rangership of the Parks. We have shown elsewhere that Horace Walpole did all he could to assist his nephew out of his difficulties, by proposing to him an heiress worth a hundred and fifty thousand pounds, which not only led him into a serious quarrel with his own uncle—who being intrusted with the care of the young lady, endeavoured to make a match between her and one of his own sons—but brought him the further annoyance of seeing it become abortive, in consequence of Lord Orford's refusing to have her. We hardly know whether Mr. Fox was more culpable for endeavouring to help the impoverished noble by a good post, than was Horace Walpole for offering to save him at the expense of a rich heiress.

"The artful and disingenuous letter," as Walpole styles it, was answered by one equally artful and equally disingenuous, in which the writer endeavoured to throw in as much as possible of that small diplomacy to which negotiators have been so partial ever since the days of Machiavelli. Horace introduces it by saying,

"I determined at once to guard my expressions in such a manner that, under the appearance of the same insincere cordiality which Fox affected to wear, it should not be possible to fix either declaration or engagement upon me; showing him, at the same time, that I would neither accept favour from him, nor be indirectly obliged to him through my nephew."

He adds that he was aware that if he refused to acquaint his nephew with this advantageous proposal, his friends and himself would be sure to make a terrible outcry against him for his insensibility to his nephew's interests.

"Dear Sir, November 21, 1762.

"After having done what the world knows I have done, to try to retrieve the affairs of my family, and to save my nephew from ruin, I can have little hopes that any interposition of mine will tend to an end I wish so much. I cannot even flatter myself with having the least weight with my Lord Orford. In the present case, I can still less indulge myself in any such hopes. You remember in the case of the St. Michael election* how hardly he used me on your account. I know how much he resented, last year, his thinking you concerned in the contest about the borough where he set up Mr. Thomas Walpole; and as he has not even now deigned

* Lord Orford took so ill his uncle's assisting Fox on the contested election for St. Michael, Cornwall, that Horace offered to

to answer Mr. Boone's letter, I can little expect that he will behave with more politeness to me. Yet I think it so much my duty to lay before him anything for his advantage, and, what is by no means incompatible, with his honour, that I will certainly acquaint him immediately with the offer you are so good as to make.

"You see I write to you with my usual frankness and sincerity; and you will I am sure be so good as to keep to yourself the freedom with which I mention very nice family affairs. You must excuse me if I add one word more on myself. My wish is that Lord Orford should accept this offer; yet I tell you truly, I shall state it to him plainly and simply, without giving any advice, not only for the reasons I have expressed above, but because I do not mean to be involved in this affair any otherwise than as a messenger. A man who is so scrupulous as not to accept any obligation for himself, cannot be allowed to accept one for another without thinking himself bound in gratitude as much as if done to himself. The very little share I ever mean to take more in public affairs shall and must be dictated by disinterested motives. I have no one virtue to support me but that of disinterestedness; and if I act with you, no man living shall have it to say that it was not by choice and by principle. I am, dear Sir, your sincere, humble servant. "HORACE WALPOLE."*

Fox as clearly saw through Walpole's "frankness and sincerity," as Walpole had seen through his; and, according to the account of the latter, he took his revenge by stopping his payments from the Treasury

resign his seat for his nephew's borough, if not allowed to vote as he pleased. By this allusion, the writer artfully reminds his correspondent how little he had gained by serving him; in the next sentence, he as artfully alludes to Fox's recent opposition to the Walpoles in another election; and in the reference to Mr. Boone, he quite as diplomatically lets him know that he was aware that Mr. Fox had already 'sounded' that gentleman respecting Lord Orford, before he applied to his uncle.

* "Memoirs of George III." Vol. i. p 214.

for some months, till Walpole wrote to Lord Bute on the subject; then they went on as usual.

Although it is plain Horace was unwilling to make use of Fox's suggestion, he wrote to his nephew the next day, acquainting him with it, and concluding with expressing his willingness to be a cypher in the affair, adding, somewhat unnecessarily, "as he was in everything else." The Earl appears to have taken him at his word—came to town without replying to his letter—called on his uncle, and to his inquiries as to what he was to do, receiving a reply that seemed to indicate a wish that he would do nothing, went to Mr. Fox, and at once accepted the post that had been offered him. In relating this, Walpole adds, that Lord Orford "never gave that ministry one vote afterwards; continuing in the country as he would have done if they had given him nothing." Very sensible conduct! The duties of Rangership did not include voting for Ministers; and his Lordship, previously to accepting the post, had not been bound by either of the negociators to any such dependence.

We shall now proceed to describe Walpole's political proceedings, with relation to the affairs of his cousin, Henry Seymour Conway, who had obtained the rank of Lieutenant-General, and was a member of the House of Commons, where he had acquired considerable reputation as a speaker.

General Conway had been kept abroad with the army till the peace, to which the Ministry knew him to be opposed, had been voted by the Legislature.

They thought they would meet with no difficulty from him after this had been done. His brother, Lord Hertford, they felt assured was too quiet in his political habits to influence him against them; and his friend, the Duke of Devonshire, though smarting under some uncivil treatment from their hands, was too cautious to commit himself by hostile measures. They overlooked Conway's chief counsellor, who had more power over him than both. This was Horace Walpole, who was ready, at a moment's notice, to leave all the attractions of Strawberry Hill, to stir up opposition against the Minister Grenville, to whose arbitrary use of general warrants—as in the case of John Wilkes—he was strongly opposed. He easily won over the General to the same way of thinking, which, as soon as the Minister discovered, he sent Mr. Thomas Pitt (the elder brother of the more famous William) to Walpole, with the hope of getting him to undo the mischief. Bribes were tried, but failed of effect: threats were then used. Mr. Pitt said, "It could not be suffered to have men in the King's service acting against him," and then dropped this ungracious expression—"*The King could not trust his army in such hands.*" "I started," says Walpole, in relating this interview, exclaiming "Good God! Mr. Pitt, what are they going to do with the army? To what use is it to be put, if a man of Mr. Conway's virtue and tried loyalty and bravery, cannot be trusted with a regiment? You alarm me!*"

A long conversation followed; Mr. Pitt trying

* "Memoirs of George III." Vol. i. p. 341.

hard to fulfil the object of his mission, but he completely failed. The bribes had been rejected, and the threat was to be resented. Another interview took place between Walpole and Mr. Grenville, in which the Minister employed three hours to intimidate the General's friend into leading the General "in the way he should go," according to ministerial notions, which had no better success. A third interview followed. This was between Lord Grenville and Conway: the Minister, however, made no more impression on the General than he had on the General's friend; but Conway assured Mr. Grenville that he was not engaged in any opposition to the Ministry.

In the stormy discussion which ensued respecting the illegality of general warrants, General Conway voted with Walpole in the Opposition;* and when the latter was making arrangements to leave London, on a visit to his cousin, Lord Hertford, then Ambassador to the Court of France, he received the intelligence that General Conway had not only been dismissed

* Writing to his cousin Lord Hertford, Walpole says:—February 6, 1764. "For about two hours the debate hobbled on very lamely, when on a sudden your brother rose, and made such a speech—but I wish anybody was to give you the account except me, whom you will think partial; but you will hear enough of it to confirm anything I can say. Imagine fire, rapidity, argument, knowledge, wit, ridicule, grace, spirit; all pouring like a torrent, but without clashing. Imagine the House in a tumult of continued applause; imagine the ministers thunderstruck; lawyers abashed and almost blushing, for it was on their quibbles and evasions he fell most heavily, at the same time answering a whole session of arguments on the side of the court. No, it was *unique;* you can neither conceive it, nor the exclamations it occasioned."—"Walpole Letters." Vol. iv. p. 361.

from his situation in the King's bedchamber, but had been deprived of his regiment for voting against the Government. Although the Minister was following a precedent set him by Sir Robert Walpole, who had deprived of their commissions Lords Westmoreland and Cobham, and William Pitt, under similar circumstances, Horace thought himself bound to be in a great rage.

The letter he wrote to the discarded Groom of the Bedchamber is highly creditable to him :—

HORACE WALPOLE TO THE HON. H. S. CONWAY.

"Strawberry Hill, Saturday Night, Eight o'Clock.
"April 21, 1764.

"I write to you with a very bad headache; I have passed a night for which George Grenville and the Duke of Bedford shall pass many an uneasy one! Notwithstanding I heard from everybody I met, that your regiment as well as bedchamber were taken away, I would not believe it, till last night the Duchess of Grafton told me, that the night before the Duchess of Bedford said to her, 'Are not you very sorry for poor Mr. Conway? He has lost everything.' When the Witch of Endor pities, one knows she has raised the devil.

"I am come hither alone to put my thoughts into some order, and to avoid showing the first sallies of my resentment which I know you would disapprove; nor does it become your friend to rail. My anger shall be a little more manly, and the plan of my revenge a ittle deeper laid than in peevish *bons mots*. You shall judge of my indignation by its duration.

"In the meantime let me beg you, in the most earnest and most sincere of all professions, to suffer me to make your loss as light as it is in my power to make it. I have six thousand pounds in the funds; accept all, or what part you want. Do not imagine I will be put off with a refusal. The retrenchment of my expenses, which I shall from this hour commence, will convince you that I

mean to replace your fortune as far as I can. When I thought you did not want it, I had made another disposition. You have ever been the dearest person to me in the world. You have shown that you deserve to be so. You suffer for your spotless integrity. Can I hesitate a moment to show that there is at least one man who knows how to value you? The new will which I am going to make, will be a testimonial of my own sense of virtue.

"One circumstance has heightened my resentment. If it was not an accident it deserves to heighten it. The very day on which your dismission was notified, I received an order from the treasury for the payment of what money was due to me there. Is it possible that they could mean to make any distinction between us? Have I separated myself from you? Is there that spot on earth where I can be suspected of having paid court? Have I even left my name at a minister's door since you took your part? If they have dared to hint this, the pen that is now writing to you will bitterly undeceive them.

"I am impatient to see the letters you have received and the answers you have sent. Do you come to town? If you do not, I will come to you to-morrow se'nnight, that is the 29th. I give no advice on anything because you are cooler than I am—not so cool, I hope, as to be insensible to this outrage, this villany, this injustice! You owe it to your country to labour the extermination of such ministers.

"I am so bad a hypocrite, that I am afraid of showing how deeply I feel this. Yet last night I received the account from the Duchess of Grafton with more temper than you believe me capable of; but the agitation of the night disordered me so much, that Lord John Cavendish, who was with me two hours this morning, does not, I believe, take me for a hero. As there are some who I know would enjoy my mortification, and who probably designed I should feel my share of it, I wish to command myself—but that struggle shall be added to their bill. I saw nobody else before I came away but Legge, who sent for me and wrote the inclosed for you. He would have said more both to you and Lady Ailesbury, but I would not let him, as he is so ill: however, he thinks himself that he shall live. I hope he will; I would he will. I would not lose a shadow that can haunt these ministers.

"I feel for Lady Ailesbury, because I know she feels just as I do; and it is not a pleasant sensation. I will say no more, though I could write volumes. Adieu: yours as I ever have been, and ever will be."*

On receiving his dismission, General Conway, writing to his brother, alludes to the fact that none of his brother officers who voted with him had been in any way molested, and stigmatises this selection of himself for punishment as "the harshest and most unjust treatment ever offered to any man on the like occasion." He then proceeds to apologise for having given "a single vote" against the Ministry, and to marvel at his being so completely disgraced for thus exhibiting the independence of his judgment. "I don't exactly know," he adds, "from what quarter the blow comes; but I must think Lord Bute has, at least, a share in it, as since his return, the countenance of the King, who used to speak to me, *after all my votes*, is visibly altered, and of late he has not spoke to me at all." This innocence almost provokes a smile. The General ought to have been old enough in the political world to know that his communications with the Opposition could not but be watched with jealousy by the Administration, and with dissatisfaction by the Sovereign. With the Minister it must always be—"He who is not with me is against me;" and the degree of consideration which General Conway possessed at this period, made his appearance in the ranks of his political opponents a serious matter. The King, no doubt, was influenced by Lord Bute to

* "Walpole Letters." Vol. iv. p. 412.

discourage such displays of independence by making an example of the offender. The victim of the royal displeasure did not fail to excite the sympathy of the public, as appears from the following passage in a contemporary print.

"Amongst the foremost stands a gallant general, pointed out for supreme command by the unanimous voice of his grateful country. England has a Conway, the powers of whose eloquence, inspired by his zeal for liberty, animated with the fire of true genius, and furnished with a sound knowledge of the constitution, at once entertain, ravish, convince, conquer,—such noble examples are the riches of the present age, the treasure of posterity."

This is so much in the style of his friend Horace Walpole, that it is extremely probable that it emanates from Arlington instead of "Harley Street," as was assumed at its publication. General Conway's position, unfortunately, at this moment, very much required such sympathy. He says in the letter from which we have already quoted—

"I wish it was as easy to my fortune as it is to my mind in most other respects; but that too I must make as easy as I can. It comes, unluckily, at the end of two campaigns, which I felt the expense of with a much larger income, and have not yet recovered; as, far from having any reward, it was with great difficulty I got the reimbursement of my extraordinary money my last command through Holland cost me, though the States-General had, by a public act, represented my conduct so advantageously to our Court."*

As soon as this state of his circumstances became known to his friends, three of them simultaneously distinguished themselves by offering, from their own resources, to supply the General's need. These were

* "Walpole Letters." Vol iv. p. 417.

his brother Lord Hertford, the Duke of Devonshire, and Horace Walpole. The generous conduct of the latter has been already stated, and it was immediately acknowledged by its object, when writing to Lord Hertford.

"Horace Walpole," he says, "has, on this occasion, shown that warmth of friendship that you know him capable of, so strongly that I want words to express my sense of it. There is another passage in the same communication, that while it shows the writer's honourable determination to retrieve his fortunes in a way the most creditable to himself, contains a prophecy that equally shows his reliance on the instability of the present government. 'With retrenchment and economy I may be able to go on, and this great political wheel, that is always in motion, may, one day or other, turn me up, that am but the fly upon it.'"

Walpole wished Lord Hertford to resent the ill-treatment of his brother. This, however, the ambassador was not inclined to do, as General Conway had acted in direct opposition to his advice, and his friend appears to have been satisfied that what he had required was unreasonable, as it undoubtedly was. He says in a letter to his Lordship, dated May 27, 1764—"I have loved you both unalterably and without the smallest cloud between us, from children." Of his affection for the brothers, there can be no doubt; but he regarded the younger one with a species of devotion it is clear he felt for no other human being. This induced him to show his resent-

ment towards the men who had injured his friend, in a manner very well calculated to draw theirs upon himself. "You will see *my masters* order me," he states to the disgraced groom of the Bed-chamber, "as a subaltern to the Exchequer, to drop you and defend them—but you will see too, that, instead of obeying, *I have given warning*."*

Walpole alludes to his sinecure of Usher of the Exchequer, but what was the exact nature of the "warning" he boasts of having given the Administration, does not appear. It is clear, however, that he was convinced that Ministers would not long hold together, and that he was about to abandon their cause. Writing to Lord Hertford in August, he says—

"You know enough of the present actors in the political drama to believe that the present system is not a permanent one, nor likely to roll on till Christmas without some change. The first moment that I can quit party with honour I shall seize. It neither suits my inclination nor the years I have lived in the world; for, although I am not old, I have been in the world so long, and seen so much of those who figure in it, that I am heartily sick of its commerce."

In another part of the same letter he adds—"Lord Bute has thrown this country into a confusion which will not easily be dissipated without serious hours. * * * The seeds that have been sown will not be rooted up by one or two revolutions in the Cabinet."

With all his devotion for his kinsman, Walpole could not help betraying a little apprehension to Lord Hertford, as to the result upon his own circumstances of his proceedings in General Conway's behalf.

* "Walpole Letters." Vol. iv. p. 434.

This elicited from his Lordship a handsome proposal which, if accepted, would have set his fears at rest; but Walpole was not inclined to incur such obligations, and excused himself on the ground of being well prepared for any contingency. "With all my extravagance," he says in his letter of September 9, "I am much before hand, and having perfected and paid for what I wished to do here, my common expenses are trifling, and nobody can live more frugally than I, when I have a mind to it."

A report of the death of the Duke of Cumberland, which was premature, overthrew all Walpole's calculations of a favourable change in public affairs. This seems to have made him very desperate. "Could I have foreseen this tide of ill-fortune," he writes to the General, "I would have done just as I have done; and my conduct shall show I am satisfied I have done right. For the rest, come what come may, I am perfectly prepared; and while there is a free spot of earth upon the globe, that shall be my country."*

We believe these heroics did not last long. Something occurred at this period sufficiently to the advantage of his discarded friend, to chase from Walpole's mind for the time all the gloom which had involved its political views since the untoward note which had been so disastrous in its results. We have already alluded to the honourable desire of the Duke of Devonshire to befriend General Conway in his disgrace. That this was no transient impulse was soon proved; for shortly afterwards, on October 2,

* "Walpole Letters." Vol. iv. p. 456.

his grace died at Spa, leaving in his will the following codicil written in his own hand. "I give to General Conway five thousand pounds as a testimony of my friendship to him, and of my sense of his honourable conduct and friendship for me." Walpole was, of course, in ecstacies.

To return to Conway's ill success in public life, Walpole writes, after describing his devotion to his fallen friend—

"I shut myself up in the country for three days till I had conquered the first ebullitions of my rage, and then returned to town with a face of satisfaction, which some thought indifference; and others joy, at having dipped Mr. Conway in opposition. Both were mistaken. I knew that both Mr. Conway and the opposition were little formed for the business. I had everything to discourage me, and nothing but perseverance and the firmness of my own temper to carry me on. I foresaw, indeed, that the persecution he had undergone would raise the character of Mr. Conway—would lend him an importance he would never have assumed, and might one day place him at the head of this country. I foresaw that the violence and unprincipled rashness of the ministers would conduct them to a precipice; but I should far overrate my own sagacity, if I pretended to have discovered that those prospects were near enough to administer any comfort to my impatience. I knew the folly of those I was to act with. I could not flatter myself it would be exceeded by the folly of those I was to act against."*

According to this account Walpole's position was not agreeable. He could not stir up the Opposition to a strenuous protest against this arbitrary treatment of his friend, nor prevent the Ministerialists from following up their injustice by attacks upon his professional character.

* "Memoirs of George II." Vol. i. p. 408.

"Misery makes a man acquainted with strange bed fellows;" politics bring together companions equally strange. No one could have expected Walpole to associate with the Duke of Newcastle, yet on this occasion we find he did so.

"Aug. 4, 1764. For the Duke, his spirits, under so many mortifications and calamities are surprising; the only effect they and his years seem to have made on him, is to have abated his ridicules. Our first meeting, to be sure, was awkward, yet I never saw a man conduct anything with more sense than he did. There were no notices of what is passed—nothing fulsome—no ceremony; civility enough—confidence enough—and the greatest ease. You would only have thought that I had been long abroad, and was treated like an old friend's son, with whom he might make free. In truth, I never saw more rational behaviour."*

This is very curious compared with some of the sketches of the Duke we have given from the same pen. More marvels were at hand.

Walpole dined with the Duke at Claremont that day—a few weeks afterwards we find his grace breakfasting at Strawberry Hill. So intimate an association with a man whom of all others he most despised and detested, shows at least how desirous Walpole was of uniting the strange materials that made up the Opposition, of which both happened to be members.†

In one sense, Conway had been unsuccessful—though he had obtained promotion, he had never had an opportunity of distinguishing himself by any brilliant action, and had the further misfortune of having been one of the commanders in the Rochfort expe-

* "Walpole Letters," Vol. iv. p. 439.

† "Memoirs of

dition. He had, however, commanded a division with credit in the Seven Years' War, and had been engaged in six regular battles, besides smaller affairs.* Pamphlets were published, reminding the public of the disastrous affair at Rochfort, which brought Walpole's ready pen to the rescue, and he did what he could in support of his friend.† The Opposition, however, gave him more trouble than the Ministry. "I lost my temper," he says, "at finding that, whilst our enemies stuck at nothing, every phantom and every fancy was to clog our councils and retard our advances."‡ The elements of this Opposition were more heterogeneous than usual: he could not get them to amalgamate. Charles Yorke was waiting to make a bargain for himself. Charles Townshend they could neither do with nor without. With Lord George Sackville there were insuperable difficulties, for Pitt had proscribed him, the Duke of Devonshire would not join him, the Duke of Newcastle disliked him,

* Walpole. Counter Address to the Public on the Dismissal of a late General.

† Horace Walpole writes to Conway, Oct. 4, 1762: "What vexes me more is to hear you seriously tell your brother that you are always unlucky, and lose all opportunities of fighting. How can you be such a child? You cannot, like a German, love fighting for its own sake. No, you think of the mob of London, who, if you had taken Peru, would forget you the first Lord Mayor's Day, or for the first hyæna that comes to town. How can one build on virtue and on fame too? When do they ever go together? In my passion, I could almost wish you were as worthless and as great as the King of Prussia. If conscience is a punishment, is it not a reward too? Go to that silent tribunal, and be satisfied with its sentence."—"Walpole Letters," Vol. iv. p. 243.

‡ "Memoirs George III." Vol. i. p. 411.

and General Conway regarded him as his enemy. Lord Temple was cold, and everybody was indifferent. Walpole thought he had better chance with the Ministry, by playing upon the jealousies of Lord Bute and Grenville; therefore tried to get up a quarrel between them, and really exercised considerable ingenuity in effecting this laudable object.

In the following year, 1765, the differences that occurred between the King and his Ministers led to negotiations with Mr. Pitt, and the formation of a new Ministry, with the Marquis of Rockingham, as First Lord of the Treasury, who proposed General Conway as Chancellor of the Exchequer. The General desired to be Secretary at War, but Walpole persuaded him to be Secretary of State; and Secretary of State he became.

It seems strange that Horace Walpole, who had done so much to bring the Opposition to power, should be entirely omitted from their Administration. Several of his nearest friends held the highest posts there, and in some instances he had exercised his influence in placing them in that position. Yet, while he put them in, they kept him out. The fact was, that Walpole had insisted so strongly on his disinterestedness and the impossibility of his accepting office, that his friends believed him. Their taking him at his word made Walpole extremely wroth, and with no one more than with his friend the new Secretary of State, towards whom he had displayed such entire devotion. He complains bitterly of the hardship of having his assertions credited, and evidently

considered himself seriously injured by General Conway's having entertained so high an opinion of his public spirit.

Walpole became as greatly dissatisfied with the new ministry as with the last, and now made up his mind to withdraw from politics; but before he did so, he tells us he was extremely desirous of getting the payments of his place settled on some foundation that should never more expose him to "the caprice or wanton tyranny" of a Minister. He had hinted his wishes to Conway, and the General astonished his friend by receiving it in silence. Walpole's account of these curious proceedings is too characteristic to be lost.

"It was not in my nature to repeat such a hint." He adds, "As disinterestedness was my ruling passion, I did hope that, on the change, some considerable employment would be offered to me, which my vanity would have been gratified in refusing. It was mortifying enough to me when Mr. Conway (for I have said that during the last negotiation I was confined in bed with the gout) reported to me the proposed arrangement of places, to find that my name had not been so much as mentioned. That I would take no place is well known; I had frequently declared it."*

Was there ever a man so ill used with whom disinterestedness was a ruling passion? His vanity was not gratified with the offer of a considerable employment, as he had hoped, though he had frequently declared he would "take no place." Conway, instead of Horace Walpole, endeavoured to benefit his own connections, who had never professed any superfluous disinterestedness. He gave places

* "Memoirs, George III." Vol. ii. p. 212.

to those who had taken no notice of his dismissal by the Grenville Government, while Walpole, who had offered so much, written so much, and done so much for him, was passed over. He did not attempt to secure the place he had, or offer him a more considerable one. How awkward it is sometimes for men to assume a greatness of soul foreign to their natures! It was exactly in this way that Pulteney committed himself in his opposition to Sir Robert Walpole. He had professed a similar "ruling passion," and this kept him out of the Ministry which followed that from which his great rival had been deposed: nevertheless he afterwards saw his error, and was quite ready to set it aside. "Such failure of friendship," exclaims the indignant Horace, "or, to call it by its truer name, such insensibility, could not but shock a heart at once so tender and so proud as mine." But it did not make him open his mouth. It is evident that General Conway believed his friend to be the model of patriotic virtue he took so much pains to represent himself, and no doubt was mystified as to the cause of the coldness, and "little mixtures of conscious scorn," with which Walpole now began to regard him.

Horace went to France immediately after these occurrences, and in the fascinations of the fair divinities of Paris he sought to forget the disappointment he had experienced in London. Walpole did not, however, entirely withdraw himself from his political connections in consequence of their unsatisfactory proceedings. On his return to England in April of

the following year, he found the Ministry in considerable difficulties. During his absence General Conway had moved the repeal of the Stamp Act, which had passed by a large majority. Burke's fine description of this event is worthy of his brilliant reputation.

"I will likewise do justice—I ought to do it—to the honourable gentleman who led us into this House. Far from the duplicity wickedly charged on him, he acted his part with alacrity and resolution. We all felt inspired by the example he gave us, down even to myself, the weakest in that phalanx. I declare for one, I knew well enough (it could not be concealed from anybody) the true state of things; but, in my life, I never came with so much spirits into this House. It was a time for a man to act in. We had powerful enemies; but we had faithful and determined friends, and a glorious cause. We had a great battle to fight, but we had the means of fighting; not as now, when our arms are tied behind us. We did fight that day, and conquer. I remember, sir, with a melancholy pleasure, the situation of the honourable gentleman (General Conway) who made the motion for the repeal; in that crisis when the whole trading interest of this empire, crammed into your lobbies with a trembling and anxious expectation, waited almost to a winter's return of light, their fate from their resolution. When at length you had determined in their favour, and your doors thrown open, showed them the figure of their deliverer in the well-earned triumph of his important victory, from the whole of that grave multitude there arose an involuntary burst of gratitude and transport. They jumped upon him like children on a long absent father. They clung about him as captives about the redeemer. All England, all America, joined in his applause; nor did he seem insensible to the best of all earthly regards—the love and admiration of his fellow-citizens. Hope elevated and joy brightened his crest. I stood near him; and his face—to use the expression of the Scripture of the first martyr—his face was as if it had been the face of an angel. I do not know how others feel; but if I had stood in that situation, I never would have ex-

changed it for all that kings in their profusion could bestow. I did hope that that day's danger and honour would have been a band to hold us all together for ever. But, alas! that with other pleasing visions is long since vanished."*

The conduct of Lord Rockingham had been so injudicious as to offend many of his coadjutors, and many began to look with hope and confidence towards Mr. Pitt,—the Duke of Grafton going so far as to assert that unless the able men were called to the head of affairs, he would resign.

Walpole was seized upon immediately it was known he had returned. It was desirable to get rid of Lord Bute, who still secretly influenced the King; it was equally desirable to have the assistance of Mr. Pitt, who might make himself formidable by joining Lord Bute, or the Bedfords, or some other faction then troubling the political world. The Duke of Richmond sought Walpole out, and conferred with him; then Lord Rockingham came, still more eager for his advice. Walpole and Conway persuaded the Duke of Grafton to defer his resignation; but he gave notice of his design to the King, who also desired he should defer it for a few days. His Majesty would not send to Mr. Pitt, and Mr. Pitt would not go to his Majesty without being sent for. Some negotiations were carried on with a view to a settlement. Walpole proposed the Duke of Richmond in the room of the Duke of Grafton, which,

* "Speech of Edmund Burke, Esq., in 1774, on American Taxation."

after some difficulties he carried. He urged the Ministry to end the session, but without effect; he saw they must fall, and was desirous that they should find some plausible excuse for resigning. They seemed, however, in no hurry, till the Chancellor, Lord Northington, who could not agree with his colleagues, told the King that he must resign if his Majesty would not send for Mr. Pitt.

Again Walpole was consulted by the leading ministers, and he advised them to take advantage of the next court-day and resign their places, recommending his Majesty to send for Mr. Pitt. Mr. Conway seemed to approve of this advice, but the Duke of Richmond did not; and before his Grace could reconcile himself to it, his Majesty quietly informed his Minister that he had sent for Mr. Pitt. Walpole considers that he hastened the dismissal of the Rockingham Ministry by obtaining the seals for the Duke of Richmond. Perhaps he thought this a proper reward for their confidence in his assumption of disinterestedness.

The new Ministry included General Conway as Secretary of State. Pitt desired it, and Walpole urged it. The Duke of Grafton was at the head of the Treasury. Pitt became Privy Seal, and was raised to the peerage as Earl of Chatham. A few of the old Administration were retained, and the rest discarded. Walpole was once more consulted; but the honour came this time from the all-powerful Earl of Chatham, who went to him at Bath, and a conversation of two hours ensued: nothing, however,

of any importance seems to have been said by either party.

A short time only had elapsed before Conway became uneasy, in consequence of Lord Chatham desiring him to write with what he considered undeserved harshness to his friend Lord Edgecumbe, for refusing to be made a Lord of the Bedchamber. Conway consulted with Walpole about resigning, but his friend was in favour of acting prudently, and after six months' negotiation, he persuaded him into this course, though Lord Edgecumbe was dismissed. The trouble Walpole had had in this apparently trivial business was so great that it had quite disgusted him with politics—possibly the not having had the refusal of some considerable employment may have contributed to this result. He says:—

"The person [the Duke of Grafton,] who profited of my fatigues, and of the credit I had with Mr. Conway proved so unworthy; and so sick did I grow, both of that person and of the fatigues I underwent, that I totally withdrew myself from the scene of politics, and tasted far more satisfaction in my retreat, than I had done in the warmest moments of success and triumph."*

Walpole sent a message by Lord Hertford to the King, to press General Conway not to resign, which he seemed desirous of doing. The King said he had written to Mr. Conway, and told him his Government depended on *his* conducting the business of the House of Commons. Lord Hertford replied, he believed his brother was more inclined to stay than he had been. The King said, eagerly, "How have you brought

* "Memoirs George III. Vol. ii. p. 384."

it about? I am sure you and Mr. Walpole have done it."

With the approval of Walpole, General Conway took for his Secretary, Hume, the historian, who had been Secretary to his brother, Lord Hertford, a precedent we should be glad to see followed by his successors. Men of literary merit seem now to be excluded from offices where their superior mental resources might do the State the greatest possible service; but, instead of availing himself of such talent, the Statesman has recourse to some political connexion of the tadpole species, with a mind of the smallest calibre, that never on any emergency expands beyond the official red tape and sealing-wax routine. Secretaries of State might profit to an extent beyond past experience, by the assistance of men of cultivated and powerful intellect; and First Lords of the Treasury and Chancellors of the Exchequer would find their political expositions rendered a great deal more luminous, if they could have constant recourse to minds of a higher order than those possessed by the human machines they usually employ.

Walpole added to his numerous good offices towards General Conway by endeavouring to effect a reconciliation between him and Lord Chatham, and waited on Lord Chancellor Camden for that purpose. Lord Camden was rather averse to Conway, and in the conference let out an intimation that he was to be got rid of. The King, however, had once thought Conway capable of taking the highest place in the

Ministry, and Walpole strove to keep him in, till Lord Chatham, in consequence of his increasing unpopularity, would be obliged to go out. Walpole finally retired from Parliament at the general election in the beginning of 1768, to which event he thus alludes :—

" The comfort I feel in sitting peaceably here, instead of being at Lynn in the high fever of a contested election, which, at least, would end in my being carried about that large town like the figure of a pope at a bonfire, is very great. I do not think, when this function is over, that I shall repent my resolution. What could I see by sons and grandsons playing over the same knaveries that I have seen their fathers and grandfathers act. Could I hear oratory beyond my Lord Chatham's? Will there ever be parts equal to Charles Townshend's?"*

* "Walpole Letters." Vol. v. p. 196.

CHAPTER XI.

HORACE WALPOLE, EARL OF ORFORD.

THOUGH Mr. Bentley had been so useful to Walpole during the construction of "Strawberry Hill," he had not the good fortune to retain his friendship many years. In 1761 he brought out a play founded on Fontaine's "Trois Souhaits," called "The Wishes, or Harlequin's Mouth opened," in which, in imitation of the Italian comedy, Harlequin, Pantaloon, and Columbine, are speaking, instead of pantomimic characters. Walpole went to see it on the first night of performance, and indulges in a good deal of pleasantry at the expense of his friend, and his friend's wife, while describing the unfavourable manner in which it was received. He subsequently refers to the same writer's poetical epistle to Lord Melcomb,

* "Walpole Letters." Vol. iv. pp. 147, 161.

in similar terms. Mr. Bentley obtained an inferior Government appointment under the administration of Lord Bute, and a pension of five hundred pounds a-year, which possibly originated his satirical poem against Wilkes, entitled "Patriotism," and also may account for Walpole's unfriendly feelings. He also wrote two other dramas, "Philodamas," and "The Prophet:" his success was not very encouraging in either. He possessed an accomplished mind, but was unsteady and imprudent. He died in 1782.

In the preceding chapter that event has been related which closed Walpole's political life. Though he had retired from Parliament, he took a lively interest in public affairs, and thus writes to Sir David Dalrymple, 1st of January, 1770 :—

"The curse of modern times is, that almost everything creates controversy, and that men who are willing to instruct and amuse the world, have to dread malevolence and interested censure, instead of receiving thanks.. If your part of our country is at all free from that odious spirit, you are to be envied. In our region we are given up to every venomous mischievous passion, and as we behold all the public vices that raged in and destroyed the remains of the Roman Commonwealth, so I wish we do not experience some of the horrors that brought on the same revolution. When we see men who call themselves patriots and friends of liberty, attacking the House of Commons, to what, Sir, can you and I, who are really friends of liberty, impute such pursuits, but to interested and disappointed ambition! When we see, on one hand, the prerogative of the Crown excited against Parliament, and on the other, the King and Royal Family traduced and insulted in the most shameless manner, can we believe that *such* a faction is animated by honesty or love of the constitution.

When, as you very sensibly observe, the authors of grievances are the loudest to complain of them; and when those authors and their capital enemies shake hands, embrace, and join in a common cause, which set can we believe the most or least sincere? And when *every* set of men have acted *every* part, to whom shall the well-meaning look up. What can the latter do, but sit with folded arms and pray for miracles? Yes, Sir, they may weep over a prospect of ruin too probably approaching, and regret a glorious country nodding to its fall, when victory, wealth, and daily universal improvements, might make it the admiration and envy of the world."*

Walpole then breaks out into a rhapsody which he possibly thought was a little too extravagant, for he desires his correspondent not to allow this letter to pass out of his hands; and reiterates his desire to be allowed to enjoy the remnant of his days in quiet. But quietude to so restless a spirit was a strange desire. He who had been everything by turns, but nothing long, "in one revolving moon,"—printer, publisher, author, connoisseur, architect, builder, politician, and fine gentleman, was not likely to turn his gothic castle into a hermitage, and dispose of its innumerable treasures in favour of a string of beads and a horse-hair shirt. Nevertheless, he knew intervals of solitary meditation; he had been a sufficient antiquary as regards the past, let us hope that he was a sufficient Christian as regards the future.

Walpole affected something of a philosophic old age, but this was only one of his occasional affectations, of which he had always a good stock on hand. Writing in the summer of 1770, he says:—

"I shall never pass a triste old age in turning the Psalms into

* "Walpole Letters." Vol. v. p. 257.

Latin or English verse. My plan is to pass away calmly: cheerfully if I can: sometimes to amuse myself with the rising generation, but to take care not to fatigue them, nor weary them with old stories, which will not interest them; as their adventures do not interest me. Age would indulge prejudices, if it did not sometimes polish itself against younger acquaintance; but it must be the work of folly if one hopes to contract friendship with them, or desires it, or thinks one can become the same follies, or expects they should do more than bear one for one's good humour."*

Walpole's plan, though not novel, was very good. Every one wishes to pass away calmly; but the calm he waits for rarely attends him. His ideas respecting his conduct to the rising generation no doubt are judicious, and his reflections on the incompatibility of age and youth have all the force of an apothegm. The whole, however, forms a contrast to various lively demonstrations, which, not long ago, he appeared so pleased to chronicle. Walpole was, in truth, a sort of moral chameleon that shifted its hues with the varying circumstances under which it was seen. What was the gayest *couleur de rose* ever beheld by a fine gentleman, in the next moment became the most sombre hue ever assumed by a philosopher.

An event took place in the spring of the year 1771 which caused a good deal of speculation and conjecture for a considerable time afterwards: this was a burglary in Walpole's house, in Arlington street, of an unusual character; for although all his cabinets and drawers were broken open, and their contents scattered in every direction, not a single thing was

* "Walpole Letters." Vol. v. p. 272.

taken away. On so curious a circumstance Madame de Deffand says :—"Votre aventure fait tenir ici toute sorte de propos ; les uns disent que l'on vous soupçonne d'avoir une correspondence sécrète avec M. de Choiseul."

Possibly some of his facetious acquaintance at Arthur's had, with the assistance of his servant, been playing a hoax upon Walpole. Burglary in the ordinary way is, as we well know, no respecter of property ; housebreakers do not burst open the cabinets of a connoisseur merely to satisfy their curiosity.

In the autumn of 1774 Walpole, who generally contrived to meet with some mishap when chaperoning ladies in his own neighbourhood, was returning with Lady Browne from Lady Blandford's, in the ferry-boat—the Thames being swollen by incessant rains —when the boat was carried away by the current to Isleworth, and ran against the piers of the new bridge. The lady's screams brought timely assistance, or it is probable both would have been tumbled into the river.* Walpole, as we have already intimated, delighted in the office of Squire o'Dames, and the older he grew the more gallant he became. To be publicly in attendance upon some very pretty woman had always attraction sufficient to draw him out of his Strawberry Hill retirement. He was not likely to be useful upon such an emergency as a boat's being carried away by the current ; indeed, the lady was the best fitted of the two to get them out of a

* "Walpole Letters." Vol. v. p. 374.

scrape, if they should chance to get into one. Walpole thought he fulfilled the claims of gallantry by a copy of verses, and would have considered that lady unconscionably *exigeante* who was not to be satisfied with a morning meal in the blue breakfast-room, and a serenade of French-horns on the water.

In September, 1774, he bitterly complains of want of occupation. "What can I do," he asks of his cousin; "I see nothing, know nothing, do nothing. My castle is finished; I have nothing new to read; I am tired of writing; I have no new or old bits for my printers; I have only black woods around me; or, if I go to town, the family party in Grosvenor Street."*

In general, Walpole complained of having too much to do; from superintending the labours of painters, architects, printers, engravers, gardeners, builders, legislators, wits, and beauties—to be reduced to "see nothing, know nothing, and do nothing," must have been a very intolerable change. We fancy this idleness was only another affectation. Walpole always had something to do: as a correspondent, as an author, as a connoisseur, as a patron, as a politician, as a fine gentleman, there was always plenty for him to employ his thoughts upon. It would have been a thousand pities if the finishing of Strawberry Hill should have left its owner without occupation; there were other things to build besides gothic castles—"Reputation, Reputation,"—and this edifice it was now his daily labour to com-

* "Walpole Letters." Vol. v. p. 374.

plete in a far more durable manner than he had built his Twickenham mansion.

In June, 1776, Walpole is found repeating his complaints of his indolence, and asserting that he is not occupying himself with any kind of literary labour. He says :—

"Though I have scarce a settled purpose about anything, I think I shall never write any more. I have written a great deal too much unless I had written better; and I know I should now only write still worse. One's talent, whatever it is, does not improve at near sixty—yet if I liked it, I dare to say a good reason would not stop my inclination; but I am grown most indolent in that respect, and most absolutely indifferent to every purpose of vanity. Yet, without vanity I am become still prouder, and still more contemptuous."

He adds :—

"I have a contempt for my countrymen that makes me despise their approbation. The applause of slaves and of the foolish mad, is below ambition. Mine is the haughtiness of an ancient Briton, that cannot write what would please this age, and would not if he could."

And a little further on he says :—

"Unalterable in my principles, careless about most things below essentials, indulging myself in trifles by system, annihilating myself by choice, but dreading folly at an unseemly age, I contrive to pass my time agreeably enough, yet see its termination approach without anxiety."*

Walpole did please the age, and moreover was well qualified to do so. "The applause of slaves and of the foolish mad," was neither below his ambition nor above it. He had no contempt for his countrymen as long as they praised him, and he never despised their approbation till he found a difficulty in acquiring it.

* "Walpole Letters." Vol. vi p. 451.

In the month of July, 1776, Walpole was greatly alarmed on account of his cousin, General Conway, who had been seized with illness closely resembling paralysis. Although the physician assured him there was no danger, the effect produced upon Walpole by this malady, was of a singularly grave and painful nature. He says :—

"It has operated such a revolution on my mind, as no time, at my age, can efface. It has at once damped every pursuit which my spirits had even now prevented my being weaned from, I mean virtù. It is like a mortal distemper in myself; for can amusements amuse, if there is but a glimpse,—a vision of outliving one's friends."

He adds,—

"I have had dreams in which I thought I wished for fame—it was not, certainly, posthumous fame at any distance: I feel it was confined to the memory of those I love. It seems to me impossible for a man who has no friends to do anything for fame—and to me the first position in friendship is to intend one's friends should survive one."*

Very creditable to Walpole was the friendly interest he evinced in the success such of aspirants for literary fame who applied to him for advice or assistance; this was never more conspicuously displayed than in the case of Captain Robert Jephson. This gentleman was born in Ireland in 1736, and obtained a commission in the 73rd Regiment, which was reduced at the peace of 1763, when he retired on half-pay. He was so fortunate as to obtain in addition, through Mr. Gerard Hamilton, a pension on the Irish establishment, and also became a member of the Irish House of Commons. Among his

* "Walpole Letters." Vol. v. p. 453.

countrymen, his talents were held in great esteem, and his social qualities are referred to by a respectable authority as obtaining for him access to the best society of Dublin.* But he was not satisfied with the reputation acquired in this position. He possessed considerable literary talents, and was anxious that they should have the best field for their display. He sought distinction as a poet, and put forth a publication with the title of "Roman Portraits;" but his strength lay in dramatic composition. He first tried farce in a little piece called "Two Strings to your Bow." His ambition, however, was to shine in tragedy, and this brought him into communication with Walpole, who readily supplied an epilogue to his "Braganza," represented with marked success at Drury Lane Theatre in the year 1775. This play so pleased his new friend, who chanced to be directing a good deal of his attention to theatrical matters at this period, that on other works by the same hand being submitted in manuscript to his consideration—particularly the tragedies of "Vitellia," and "The Law of Lombardy," he wrote to the author in the summer of 1777 a friendly criticism on the former, which Captain Jephson was desirous he should offer to Colman. Walpole had just witnessed a performance of "The School for Scandal,"—the first representation of this admirable play had taken place on the 8th of May of that year,—and he paid his friend the compliment to imagine that he could succeed in the same line—strongly recommending

* "Hardy's Memoirs of Lord Charlemont."

him to make an attempt, with which object he forwarded to him his "Thoughts on Comedy." It was however, a little unreasonable to expect that Ireland could produce two Sheridans.

On the "Law of Lombardy," Walpole wrote to the author in the following October, a somewhat elaborate criticism; he made some objections; nevertheless his opinion on the whole was encouraging. This tragedy was brought out in Drury Lane in 1779, but was played only nine nights. The author designed exercising his dramatic talent in a way as agreeable as possible to his very obliging friend, and with a great deal of care and no slight degree of judgment, dramatised the Castle of Otranto in 1780, under the title of "The Count of Narbonne." This compliment was so agreeable to the author of the romance, that he exerted himself in every way to have the play brought before the public under the most favourable auspices. It appeared at Covent Garden in the following year, when Walpole came to town expressly to attend the rehearsal, and exercise whatever influence he possessed with managers, critics, actors and actresses in behalf of the author, to whom he wrote the result from day to day. The first representation was on the 17th of November, and was completely successful. Mr. Wroughton played the Count with great spirit; his coadjutors, Henderson and Lewis, endeavoured to support him in the characters of Raymond and Theodore, but with much less effect. Miss Satchell took the part of Adelaide; she was young and pretty, and these seem to have been her highest qualifica-

tions. An actress of much higher grade, Miss Younge, was the chief support of the play; her scenes are described as having been performed in the highest perfection, and to have elicited applause that lasted for several minutes.

Notwithstanding the success of "the Count of Narbonne," and the great obligations the author lay under to Mr. Walpole, he unwisely expressed dissatisfaction at some unimportant change that his friend had made in the scenery; which was replied to with perfect good temper, and with abundance of praise. Walpole was very glad to get away from the feverish atmosphere of the green-room to the elegant retirement of his Twickenham retreat, whence he was not to be drawn by any further display of the Captain's dramatic talent either in comedy or tragedy.*

On the 21st of August, 1778, Walpole had another narrow escape from drowning. He was in a boat with his three nieces, Miss Keppel, and Lady Bridget Tollemache, to see the Goldsmiths' Company return in barges from dining in tents in a field next to Pope's villa. His fair companions, with a footman and two watermen, were ten in number—too many for so small a boat—and were in the middle of the river, when a large boat full of drunken people purposely drove against them. Their friends on the shore, who were watching them, thought they were gone; but fortunately the shock did no mischief

* Recently "The Castle of Otranto," has been burlesqued at one of our minor theatres.

beyond frightening the whole party, which no doubt was the object of their insolent assailants. In relating the accident, Walpole exclaims, "Neptune never would have had so beautiful a prize as the four girls!" * we cannot think the ocean god had any business so far inland as Twickenham.

A water-party was now an unusual indulgence, for Walpole suffered very much this year from indisposition, more particularly towards the winter. In November he writes to Lady Browne: "The gout is in both my feet, both my knees, and in my left hand and elbow. Had I a mind to brag, I could boast of a little rheumatism too, but I scorn to set value on such a trifle." † His good-humour must have been unconquerable, if it could shine forth from under such circumstances. His printer was now employed as his secretary, and as his correspondence was kept up with his friends, as he was writing his life of Baker, and was occasionally occupied with his press, there is no doubt the printer had sufficient occupation.

Horace was in town when the metropolis was visited by the terrible storm of January 1, 1779, and was glad to escape from its dilapidated buildings for a few days' visit to Strawberry Hill.

Walpole, though one of the quietest men in the world, and one who loved retirement and his own ease, was always placing himself in positions of difficulty, and getting into scenes of danger; thus he became a voluntary witness of the Gordon riots.

* "Walpole Letters." Vol. vi. p. 10.

† Ibid. Page 25.

Something more than seventy years ago, the increasing liberality of the public mind allowed the success of some efforts for the amelioration of the Roman Catholics. These reforms were regarded with excessive jealousy by certain Protestant zealots, who inflamed the populace with the cry of "No Popery!" against the leading men of the old faith, and those known to favour them, till they began to amuse themselves with the destruction of their residences. No effective opposition having been attempted, the mob increased in audacity as well as in numbers, and meditated attacks on the prisons, the bank, and other public buildings. These purposes were soon executed, and the whole city appeared to have been given up to the hands of reckless incendiaries. Speaking of the buildings thus destroyed, Walpole says, in June, 1780: "I saw those of the King's Bench, New Prison, and those on the three sides of the Fleet Market, which united into one blaze. The town and parks are now one camp—the next disagreeable sight to the capital being in ashes."* In another letter, he calls it the most horrible sight he had ever witnessed, and stated his anticipations of seeing at least half the town given up to the flames.

The Government at last woke from their apathy, and sent a strong body of soldiers to quell the tumult; they came into collision with the mob when the latter were engaged in gutting and firing some houses, and

* "Walpole Letters." Vol. vi. p. 88

after a short but severe conflict, the rioters fled in all directions, and London was saved.

On attaining his sixtieth year, Walpole writes to his cousin, General Conway, complaining of the dislike he has to being stared at by strangers; and adds: "My spirits are never low; but they seldom will last out the whole day; and though I dare to say, I appear to many capricious, and different from the rest of the world, there is more reason in my behaviour than there seems." * He strongly disclaims anything like affectation, yet no characteristic has been so generally attributed to him. Perhaps it had become natural from constant use. The airs and graces of the fine gentleman often interfered with better influences. He affected a vast amount of liberality, but an overflowing sense of superiority forbade anything resembling real sympathy for the classes beneath him. He affected also a prodigious degree of sincerity; yet was frequently found playing the courtier to those persons of consequence whom he takes the greatest pains to assure us he despised. He affected indifference to wealth and station, and yet no one more jealously guarded his own. He affected to be of the most modest, unassuming, careless, thoughtless, unworldly nature; and yet he was ever studying to add to his knowledge of the world, and ever striving to bring it to the most profitable market.

Walpole was annoyed, in the spring of 1781, by the rumours of a publication by Philip, second Earl

* "Walpole Letters." Vol. v. p. 478.

of Hardwicke, of a quarto volume with the title of "Walpoliana; or, a few anecdotes of Sir Robert Walpole." His attention was first directed to it by his friend Cole; but, from the announcement, he was in doubt whether it would be a collection of letters, or state-papers, or of sayings and anecdotes. He seems, however, to have regarded it with some suspicion, as emanating from a source he thought hostile to his father. The work was a small quarto, privately printed, made up of reminiscences of the great minister, not always correct, and anecdotes far from trustworthy*.

One of the most celebrated among the female writers of the last century was Hannah More, whose literary talent had the good fortune to appear at a season the most favourable for its appreciation. If we attempt a comparison between the female intelligence of the present age and that of the last; if we compare the Somervilles, Jamesons, Marsh's, Barretts, Gores, and some twenty or thirty others, only a degree below their highly gifted sisters, with the Montagues, Macaulays, Mores, D'Arblays, Piozzis, Barbaulds, and the ablest of their fair contemporaries, we are almost inclined to question the title to celebrity which the latter so generally obtained. Hannah More, probably, might have claimed precedence over the rest, so high was the estimation with which she was regarded, and so universal her popularity as a writer both in prose and verse.

* Two small volumes bearing the title "Walpoliana," being a collection of the pleasantries of Horace Walpole, were subsequently published by Pinkerton.

Her *chef-d'œuvre* "Cælebs in Search of a Wife," is, as a novel, the dullest of dull narratives compared with the more striking prose fictions penned by female writers of the present day. None of her numerous tracts for popular distribution approach the grace of Mary Howitt, or the ability of Harriet Martineau; and as for her poetry, her dramas, &c., &c., &c., one page of the moving verse of Miss Barrett (Mrs. Browning), is worth a whole hecatomb of such unimaginative labours.

Nevertheless so low was the standard of poetical taste about the last quarter of the last century that Hannah More was regarded by a nation of admirers as a tenth muse, and in the year 1781, when she first made the acquaintance of Horace Walpole she was in the zenith of her fame. We do not mean to deny her the possession of very considerable talent. She was the means of circulating through society much good sense in prose and verse very fairly written; her ideas also, on more than one great political question were sound and clear, but her knowledge was limited, and her reading very confined and much too sectarian.

Her character for benevolence must have attracted Walpole quite as much as her fame as a literary contemporary, for throughout his intercourse, he dwells on her moral a great deal more than on her intellectual gifts; though he is not indisposed to pay her compliments on the latter when an opportunity presents itself. She was invited to Strawberry Hill, and every possible pains taken to make her desirous of a repetition of the favour. It was not long before she was

again a guest there, when, according to her own account "she passed as delightful a day as elegant literature, high breeding, and lively wit could afford." The well bred vivacity of the man of fashion, and the earnest propriety of the moralist, were, there is no doubt, equally refreshing the one to the other. Though no two persons could be less alike in their feelings and opinions, the good qualities of both were soon held by both in the very highest estimation, and as long as they lived they continued to regard each other with the sincerest respect.

Walpole's correspondence with Hannah More commenced on the 6th of May, 1784, with a few complimentary lines, in acknowledgment of a copy she had sent him of her poem, "The Bas Bleu" in which she had introduced his name. He did not write again till November of the same year when a present from her of some Bristol stones drew from him a long and interesting communication. It was at this period that Hannah More discovered the marvellous milk-woman of Bristol, whose poetic effusions she had undertaken to bring before the public, and she was also extremely active in raising funds for the purpose of permanently bettering the condition of the humble poetess. Some of her productions she had sent to Mr. Walpole who, though he gave a favourable opinion, gave also much prudent advice as to the conduct of her patroness towards her, particularly as to the books most proper to place in her hands. He appears to have been against moving her from the position in which she had been born, instancing the melancholy

fate of Stephen Duck,* to show the mischief of such interference.

As the sequel proved, nothing could have been more judicious than this advice: but his friend, far from being as wise as himself, had filled the mind of her *protegée* with extravagant expectations; so that when the subscriptions for the milkwoman's poems came in, the sum fell far short of her hopes. Finally, when a deed was drawn up by which the money was so placed in the funds that she could not have immediate command of it, Ann Yearsley became extremely dissatisfied. It appears as if Hannah More had tried to carry out her views in favour of the poetess with very little reference to her feelings; this brought forth an angry remonstrance, which was replied to by an equally angry rejoinder, and very soon the milkwoman and her patroness were at open feud. Each considered herself wronged, and while making her own case as perfect as possible, did not forget to make the other out sufficiently blameable.

One of the cleverest things that proceeded from the pen of Hannah More, appeared in the shape of an anonymous letter sent by her to Mr. Walpole, in the spring of 1785. Its object was, to ridicule the employment of French idioms in English composition, and the author has amusingly contrived that it shall

* The *protegé* of Lady Sundon and Queen Caroline. They found him a common thresher—they made him a beneficed clergyman. He was so unfitted for the change, that in a fit of despondency he drowned himself.

not contain one French word or one English idiom. It is put forth as :—

"A specimen of the English language, as it will probably be written and spoken in the next century. In a letter from a lady to her friend, in the reign of George the Fifth.

"Alamode Castle, June 20, 1840.

"Dear Madam.—I no sooner found myself here than I visited my new apartment, which is composed of five pieces; the small room which gives upon the garden, is practised through the great one—and there is no other issue. As I was quite exceeded with fatigue, I had no sooner made my toilette, than I let myself fall on a bed of repose, where sleep came to surprise me.

"My lord and I are on the intention to make good cheer and a great expense; and this country is in possession to furnish wherewithal to amuse oneself. All that England has of illustrious—all that youth has of ambition, or beauty of ravishes—secs itself in this quarter. Render yourself here then, my friend, and you shall find assembled all that there is of best, whether for letters, whether for birth.

"Yesterday I did my possible to give to eat; the dinner was of the last perfection, and the wines left nothing to desire. The repast was seasoned with a thousand rejoicing sallies, full of salt and agreement, and one more brilliant than another, Lady Frances charmed me as for the first time; she is made to paint, has a great air, and has infinitely of expression in her physiognomy—her manner have as much of natural as her figure has of interest.

"I had prayed Lady B. to be of this dinner, as I had heard nothing but good of her; but I am now disabused on her subject—she is past her first youth, has very little instruction, is inconsequent and subject to caution: but having evaded with one of her pretending, her reputation has been committed by the bad faith of a friend on whose fidelity she reposed herself; she is therefore fallen into devotion, goes no more to spectacles, and play is detested at her house. Though she affects a mortal serious, I observed that her eyes were of intelligence with those of Sir James, near whom I had taken care to plant myself, though this is always a sacrifice which costs. Sir James is a great sayer of nothings; it is a spoilt mind full of fatuity

and pretension: his conversation is a tissue of impertinences, and the bad tone which reigns at present has put the last hand to his defects. He makes but little care of his word; but as he lends himself to whatever is proposed of amusing, the women all throw themselves at his head. Adieu."

This clever production made a due impression upon the person to whom it was addressed. A mind so fully alive to wit and humour was sure to appreciate it thoroughly. The abuse at which it was aimed was, however, then only beginning; it remained for the nineteenth century to play such tricks with our language—either by making it a medley of all continental phrases, or by a laboured imitation of Teutonic sentences,—to render it as unlike as possible to—

"The well of purest English undefiled,"

with which our older Classics were wont to refresh the intellects of their readers.

Walpole now cultivated the acquaintance of his fair friend with increased interest, and the sedate Hannah was in high esteem with him and his friends. She dedicated to him her poem of "Florio," in which she paid him many compliments. This produced several returns in the shape of productions of his own press; and an invitation to Strawberry Hill, whither she went on the 11th of February, 1786, though Walpole was then suffering from severe illness. "Notwithstanding his sufferings," she tells us, "I never found him so pleasant, so witty, and so entertaining." She soon after adds, "I never knew a man suffer pain with such entire patience." His freedom on matters of religion did not shock her

so much as might have been expected from a person of her pious disposition; but, as far as can be gathered from her statements, there was nothing in his conversation on such subjects, upon which any reasonable complaint could be grounded. He lent her several books; but the kind acts that made most impression upon her were bestowed on one of her friends, who lived in his neighbourhood:

"Mr. Walpole seldomer presents himself," she writes to him, "as the man of wit, than as the tender hearted and humane friend of my dear, infirm, broken spirited Mrs. Vesey. One only admires talents, and admiration is a cold sentiment with which affection has commonly nothing to do; but one does more to admire them when they are devoted to such gentle purposes."*

The correspondence between them now became frequent and regular. Walpole's letters were, as was his custom, full of entertainment, embracing many subjects, and illustrating all with the same felicity of expression; and Hannah More's replies never failed to do justice, not only to their good humour, but to their good feeling. It is curious to find so rigid a moralist as Hannah More, all smiles and playfulness under the influence of the veteran wit: and it is equally so to perceive the unguarded ideas of one who had been so familiar with the free-thinking *beaux esprits* of the French capital, confined within the limits of the most careful propriety, while addressing his virtuous and intelligent countrywoman.

In the summer of 1779 Walpole first became the

* "Memoirs of Hannah More." Vol. ii. p. 72.

correspondent of Mr. George Hardinge, subsequently one of the Welsh Judges, and uncle of the late Governor-General of India. Mr. Hardinge obtained some drawings of the Chateau de Grignan when in France in 1776, which he forwarded to Strawberry Hill on his return. Walpole, who was like himself, an enthusiast respecting Madame de Sevigné, returned his thanks in a cordial and sprightly letter, and invited his correspondent to his Gothic castle. They became very intimate; so much so, that once when Mr. Hardinge arrived at Strawberry Hill, Walpole, who had been suddenly called away to Houghton, left word that his visitor was to remain, and the keys of all his treasures were left in his charge. Mr. Hardinge says, "I did not and could not go to bed for many hours after midnight." They remained excellent friends until a trifle separated them. Walpole had been obliged to lay down regulations for the guidance of his numerous visitors: with this view he printed "Rules for obtaining a ticket to see Strawberry Hill," and "Rules for taking down books in the library, and replacing them." This is the only explanation extant of the following letter which Mr. Hardinge, to his great astonishment received, after he had been corresponding for many years with Walpole on the most intimate terms.

"Strawberry Hill, May 24, 1785.

"Mr. Walpole cannot help troubling Mr. Hardinge with a line on a distress he has had this morning. A company came to see his house, and said they came from Hampstead, and that Mr. Hardinge had spoken to him about them; which not having happened, Mr. Walpole did not know what to do. However as they used Mr.

Hardinge's name, Mr. Walpole (as another set was expected) offered them to come to-morrow, or to walk over the house now, till the other company should come; but they did not choose either. Mr. Hardinge knows Mr. Walpole is always desirous of obliging him, but he is so teased with numerous applications, that he is forced to be as strict as possible; and was last year obliged to print his *rules*, one of which he takes the liberty of sending to Mr. Hardinge, which may save him trouble too, as it will be an answer to those who may apply to him when he is not at leisure to write, nor can Mr. Walpole admit any accidental company, when a day is engaged; nor can the housekeeper show the house but by a written ticket."*

Mr. Hardinge never troubled Strawberry Hill again.

Walpole now complains of feeling the increasing discomforts and infirmities of old age, but when he compares his lot with those who are obliged to endure them without any of the indulgences his wealth enabled him to obtain, he is ashamed of having been so peevish. He exhibited much goodness of heart on other occasions about this period; particularly when his friend Mr. Cole, from whom he was in the habit of receiving the warmest commendations of everything he did, made some objections to his "Life of Baker:"

"You might, believe me," he writes affectionately, "have sent me your long letter: whatever it contained, it would not have made a momentary cloud between us. I have not only friendship but great gratitude for you, for a thousand instances of kindness, and should detest any writing of mine that made a breach with a friend, and still more, if it could make me forget obligations."†

Though a martyr to gout, and very frequently deprived of all society, and indeed of almost every kind of gratification, when a work of interest made its

* "Nichols' Illustrations." Vol. iii. p. 216.

† "Walpole Letters." Vol. vi. p. 37.

appearance, he fully enjoyed it, and wrote comments upon it for the entertainment of his friends. His mind seemed as active as ever in the intervals of pain; and when not printing visions, he amused himself with inventing novelties in architecture. After perusing Swinburne's "Travels through Spain," in which the writer describes the Moorish buildings of the peninsula, an idea seems to have entered Walpole's mind that he could execute something at Strawberry which should combine the beauties of the Gothic and the Moorish; and he afterwards says that were he not so old, he would attempt this combination of styles in a new work of fiction.

Walpole's experiments on Gothic architecture as exemplified in his various plans and improvements at Strawberry Hill, showed that he was learning the art of building while he was practising it. In the game of putting up and pulling down, which he carried on for so many years, he was like a tyro at chess, who knows only the names of the pieces and their appropriate positions. Every move he made was a lesson, and his succession of battlements, a series of checkmates, from which he learned to play his pieces with more caution, and make his combinations with greater skill. He never became a first-rate player, or, it should be said a first-rate architect. Nevertheless, he contrived to put together a structure which will outlast in interest buildings erected on more correct principles, and constructed with materials much more durable and solid.

At a period of life when the heart is least sen-

sible to new impressions, Walpole contracted an intimacy which exceeded in cordiality the most ardent friendships of his youth. Towards the close of the year 1788, at the house of his friend, Lady Herries, he made the acquaintance of a gentleman of the name of Berry, who had two daughters, of great mental and personal attractions. Mr. Berry was a gentleman of fortune, though he had been disappointed of an estate which he had confidently anticipated; having been disinherited by an uncle in favour of a younger brother: he was also a man of talent and education, and had taken care that the minds of his daughters should receive the highest cultivation. Both the sisters were highly accomplished, and such agreeable additions to his society were received with a warm welcome by the old Lord of Strawberry Hill. Mr. Berry was taken into his confidence, and his judgment was consulted on such literary undertakings as Walpole had still leisure or enterprise to proceed with: the advantage of possessing so well qualified an assistant in his labours was soon felt and appreciated. The beauty, the freshness, and the superior intelligence of the young ladies charmed Walpole more and more. At the age of 71 he seems to have felt as warmly as though the position of the two numerals had been reversed.

While writing to his friend the Countess of Ossory, he describes the sisters as accomplished and unaffected:—

"Mary the eldest, sweet, with fine dark eyes, that are very lively

when she speaks, with a symmetry of face that is more interesting from being pale."*

Miss Agnes Berry seems to have been more reserved than her sister, and remarkable then as now for unaffected kindness and good sense. Walpole adds, in another letter:—

"In short they are extraordinary beings; and I am proud of my partiality for them; and since the ridicule can only fall on me, and not on them, I care not a straw for its being said that I am in love with one of them—people shall choose which; it is as much with both as either, and I am infinitely too old to regard the *qu'en dit on*."†

Walpole not only did not, as he asserts, care a straw for what was said about his admiration for his two charming acquaintances, but he was particularly gratified by the reputation which it brought him. He cultivated the idea of being "in love" with singular assiduity. His letters to them, as they have been printed, are almost always addressed to both sisters, but we fancy that we can discern a preference.

A beautiful bust of Miss Berry was sculptured for Walpole by their friend Mrs. Damer, and was henceforth regarded as one of his most precious treasures. He corresponded with the sisters more frequently than with the most valued of his former friends. At one time he sat up at night to write them an elaborate description of Darwin's botanic garden; and on their departure for Yorkshire, a month or two later, he exhibited all a lover's anxiety to hear from them regularly. Already they are mentioned in verse as his "favourite Berrys."

His letters shortly became more frequent to Miss

* Letters to the Countess of Ossory, Vol. ii. p. 348.

† Ibid. Page 471.

Berry; they increased also in interest: they are full of entertaining anecdotes of masterly sketches of passing events, both in England and in France, and amusing notices of persons whom he had met with. Yet he always complains if his fair correspondent delays her reply, and does not fail to express his impatience for her return. He was not, however, satisfied with the phraseology of a lover: he made an advance, playfully it must be admitted, in this tender correspondence, and assumed another character. On the 29th of July he writes:—

"I have received two dear letters from you of the 18th and 25th; and though you do not accuse me, but say a thousand kind things to me in the most agreeable manner, I allow my ancientry, and that I am an old, jealous, and peevish *husband*, and quarrel with you if I do not receive a letter exactly at the moment I please to expect one."*

There are other indications of the writer approaching to that degree of admiration and tenderness, for expressing which, at a similarly advanced period of life, he had reproved the too affectionate Madame du Deffand.

Walpole fell into transports when the Miss Berrys gave an assurance that they were about to reside in his immediate neighbourhood; and he was in despair when they acquainted him with their intention to travel abroad. He at once puts aside both the husband and lover, and mourns for them like a doating father parting from his children. His letter to them of the 10th of October, 1790, is a most touching expression of his feelings.

The young ladies left England, visiting France in

* "Walpole Letters." Vol. vi. p. 331.

that troublesome time, and corresponding as regularly as possible with their attached friend at Strawberry Hill: but when any delay in the receipt of their letters occurred, he was thrown into an agony of impatience, which only subsided on the arrival of the expected packet. About the end of October the fair travellers proceeded to Italy, when his anguish for them increased: his letters, however, are full of entertaining matter—though often containing curious materials; now a little lamentation for a deceased friend, then a page of scandal respecting a living one; an account of a severe fit of the gout is succeeded by expressions of his regard for their welfare, or of impatience for their return. His letter of the 4th of February, 1791, complaining of the sufferings which his attachment to his young friends had occasioned him, is expressive of deep and intense feeling; nevertheless he assumes in the following letters to have entirely got the better of this melancholy mood, and writes in his most amusing vein. No doubt his heart yearned for their society, but he had too much good sense not to see the folly of making any further display of sentiment. In fact he subsequently excuses himself for having betrayed such excessive solicitude, by the plea that he thought himself dying, and feared he should never see them again. His contrition, however, for having committed himself is perhaps the strongest proof how entirely his affections were engaged.

Walpole is again thrown into great alarm in the month of April, by intelligence of Miss Berry having

fallen down a bank, in the neighbourhood of Pisa; his fears for the consequences are only removed by the assurances of the young lady, that the accident was of a trifling nature. He again puts forth all his powers of entertainment, and proceeds to be more amusing than ever, on everything and everybody. An adventure of the Gunnings becomes a romance, and every morsel of gossip rises in his hands to the dignity of comedy. The announcement of their return after a year's absence threw him into new raptures; but then came a considerable break in this interesting correspondence, for in the summer of 1793 he enjoyed the society of his dear friends, and there was no opportunity for writing to them. In September they made a journey into Yorkshire, and then the most affectionate letters followed them from Strawberry Hill at regular intervals of not more than a week: they returned to him at the end of the year, and he was again happy. He had no occasion to write to them again before the spring, and subsequently only once the next September.

His favourite at that time entertained an idea of accepting an appointment in the household of Caroline, Princess of Wales, from which her friend urgently endeavoured to dissuade her. In his letter of October 7th, he expresses his opinion of Courts, founded on personal observation, in language very far from favourable. He wrote but one more letter to them this year; nor had he occasion to renew the correspondence till the following August, when the sisters were at the sea-side for the benefit of their health.

His pen was employed for their amusement in the following December.

Since their return from Italy they had lived at a house very near his own, to which he had given the name of "Little Strawberry Hill," which designation it bears to this day; and their being so frequently together accounts for the paucity of his letters to them at this period. Miss Berry was apprized of his wishes respecting his works, and learnt so much of his recollections and anecdotes of his own times, from his own mouth, as to become almost as familiar as himself with all the persons and events who were in turns the subjects of his conversation. For the further instruction of his fair friends, he drew up his "Reminiscences of the Court of England;" a most amusing piece of historical gossip.

Though more than sixty years have now elapsed since the events we are recording, these accomplished ladies still survive to grace a circle that has lost little of its former charm, and still comprises most of the distinguished characters of our time. As their eyes will probably peruse these pages, it would be impertinent to say more. We shall only, therefore allude to Miss Berry's literary performances, and hasten to the close of these "Memoirs."

Miss Berry, in 1810, published "Lives of Lady Rachel Russell," and "Madame du Deffand," with collections of their letters. Afterwards she wrote "Remarks on Lord Orford's Letters," and "Fashionable Friends," a Comedy. She also published, in

two volumes, a work on Social Life in England and France; and to the collective edition of Walpole's Letters which contains his correspondence with her and her sister, she prefixed the "Advertisement" that forms so important and interesting a Preface to that portion of the work.

In the summer of 1789, the infirmities natural to Walpole's time of life, did not deprive him of his cheerfulness, or diminish his philosophy; for writing to Hannah More, he says:—

"If I would live to seventy-two, ought I not to compound for the encumbrances of old age? and who has fewer? And who has more cause to be thankful to Providence for his lot? The gout, it is true, comes frequently, but the fits are short, and very tolerable; the intervals are full health. My eyes are perfect, my hearing little impaired, chiefly to whispers, for which I certainly have little occasion; my spirits never fail; and though my hands and my feet are crippled, I can use both, and do not wish to box, wrestle, or dance a hornpipe. In short, I am just infirm enough to enjoy all the prerogatives of old age, and to plead them against anything that I have not a mind to do."*

This contentment at a period when he had lost by death almost all his old friends, and when his pleasures were daily becoming more circumscribed, is extremely amiable; but as he approached the end of his long pilgrimage, his disposition became softened, and divested of that bitterness of spirit which a few years earlier he displayed at anything resembling opposition. His intimacy with Hannah More and the Misses Berry brought out the true kindness of his nature in its brightest light. For the

* "Walpole Letters." Vol. vi. p. 322.

former, in 1789, he allowed what he had refused to so many distinguished applicants—the use of his private press for the printing of one of her poems—"Bishop Bonner's Ghost."

The serious illness of Walpole's niece, the Countess of Dysart, in the autumn of 1789, which terminated in death on the 5th of September, caused him much distress; and this was followed by the decease of Lord Waldegrave, on the 22nd of October. He was sincerely attached to them both, and their loss affected him deeply. He had suffered severely too from indisposition, particularly from the effects of two falls caused by his increasing weakness. But his good spirits, however subdued, never forsook him, and in the following year we find him at Strawberry Hill, the delight of the Richmond circle, which included Lady Diana Selwyn, the Penns, the Onslows, Douglasses, Mackenzies, Keenes, Lady Mount Edgcumbe, &c.; "the Boufflers too," he adds, "are constantly invited, and the Countess Emilie sometimes carries her harp, on which they say she plays better than Orpheus; but as I never heard him on earth, nor *chez* Proserpine, I do not pretend to decide."*

He had a fit of the gout in January, 1791, of a dangerous character, but after a few days he recovered his usual state of health, with, however, occasional attacks of a milder form. He continued his correspondence with the Misses Berry, and from time to time joined in gay parties, and received

* "Walpole Letters." Vol. vi. p. 380.

them at Strawberry Hill. Here the still increasing number of his "customers," as he was pleased to term visitors who came to see the house, often put him out of patience; but this was turned into indignation when he discovered that one of his greatest treasures, the marble eagle, had been mutilated by one of this class of persons, "who had pocketed the piece."*

Towards the close of the year 1791, an event happened which, though it elicited the congratulations of Walpole's friends, procured him a vast increase to the troubles and anxieties which had of late years been pressing heavily upon him. This was the death, on the 5th of December, of his nephew, George, the third Earl of Orford, to whose titles and estates Horace Walpole succeeded. At first the change seemed to have brought with it endless confusion and labour—letters were to be read and written, accounts to be looked into, cases to be laid before lawyers, statements of farms, and histories of leases and mortgages, which the remnant of life left to him did not afford leisure to get half through. These annoyances were to be balanced against an estate loaded with debt, a crop of lawsuits with his nearest relatives, and endless consultations with lawyers, which to a mind of his quiet habits, must have appeared an intolerable grievance.

Of course, his failing health suffered under this excitement. He was scarcely ever out of his room. His literary occupations were suspended; his correspondence, though written by a deputy, became more

* 'Walpole Letters.' Vol. vi. p. 444.

and more rare. To the few letters he was obliged to write he could at first only be induced to sign his name "Uncle to the late Earl of Orford." It is not till August of the following year that we find him signing the name which had devolved upon him. Still he managed to get on with more contentment than could have been expected from an old age oppressed by so many troubles and infirmities; and, still more to his credit, he seized with avidity any opportunity of doing good: one instance. especially, in which he called to account a litigious clergyman who oppressed his tenantry, must always be remembered to his honour.*

Lord Orford's letters now, except short notes on mere matters of business, became few and far between. Sometimes an affectionate one to the Misses Berry—occasionally a playful one to Hannah More—a gossiping one to the Countess of Ossory—and then a most friendly one to his cousin Conway, sufficed for the year. He had often written more in a week, almost as many in a day. Old as he was, he was alive as ever to the calls of gallantry and courtesy, and he rarely appeared to more advantage than whilst doing the honours of his Gothic Castle, in September, 1793, to the Duchess of York and her suite, on whom he waited in a style worthy of the old school to which he belonged.

He loved to have around him a few of his ancient friends who still survived. Garrick was of the number, as were also the Ladies Murray, sisters of the first Earl of Mansfield, the Countess of

* 'Walpole Letters.' Vol. vi. p. 479.

Ailesbury, and Marshal Conway. These re-unions were delightful to him; and not less pleasant, when the weather and his health would permit, were his visits to some friendly contemporary in the neighbourhood. Thus another year or two glided on, undistinguished by any event of importance, till, in July, 1795, he received the unexpected honour of a visit from Queen Charlotte, who expressed herself as much pleased with the attentions of her host, as with the attractions of his castle.

Lord Orford's cheerfulness and amiability seemed to increase with the increase of his infirmities; nor did he cease to experience a lively interest in the news of the day, whether foreign or domestic. In the autumn of 1796, he writes to Hannah More an admirable letter, mentioning the "vast blessings" he still enjoys; and her presentation copy of a new work met with an immediate and most friendly acknowledgment.

The interchange of gifts and expressions of good-will between Lord Orford and Hannah More continued, and their mutual regard increased. The latter fully appreciated the peculiar talents, and the amiable disposition of her fashionable friend. He in return bears witness to her zeal in the exercise of the religion she professed, and to the intelligence displayed in her various writings. He styles her the "best of women," and, on one occasion, adds, with his usual felicity:—

"How I admire the activity of your zeal and perseverance. Should a new church ever be built, I hope in a side chapel there will be an altar dedicated to St. Hannah Virgin and Martyr, and

that your pen, worn to the bone, will be enclosed in a golden reliquaire and preserved on the shrine."*

But the most acceptable compliment he paid her was, the present of a copy of Bishop Wilson's Bible, in three volumes, quarto, bound in morocco, which he sent her with this inscription written on the fly-leaf:

TO HIS EXCELLENT FRIEND,
MISS HANNAH MORE,
THE BOOK,
WHICH HE KNOWS TO BE THE DEAREST OBJECT OF HER STUDY,
AND BY WHICH,
TO THE GREAT COMFORT AND RELIEF
OF NUMBERLESS AFFLICTED AND DISTRESSED INDIVIDUALS,
SHE HAS PROFITED BEYOND ANY PERSON WITH WHOM
HE IS ACQUAINTED,
IS OFFERED,
AS A MARK OF HIS ESTEEM AND GRATITUDE,
BY HER SINCERE
AND OBLIGED HUMBLE SERVANT,
HORACE, EARL OF ORFORD,
1795.

Walpole's visits to France had afforded him an insight into the state of affairs in that country, which made him regard with no common interest the extraordinary proceedings that were daily taking place there. Although no friendly Madame du Deffand now existed with her copious gossip—indeed, he had no correspondent whatever in Paris—he took care to obtain, through the best available sources, early intelligence of all its transactions; and his indignation when the news arrived of the sanguinary crimes there committed, equally disgracing government and people, was only exceeded by his disgust. All that he had foreseen had come to pass, and the conclusions he drew

* "Walpole Letters." Vol. vi. p. 523.

from the horrible state of anarchy into which the kingdom was falling, were marked by equal judgment and foresight. If he had entertained any sympathy for an oppressed people, striving to cast off the load of misery and misrule under which they had so long groaned, the doleful tragedies that were almost hourly being enacted in the streets of the blood-stained metropolis, would have changed it to horror.

His letters at this time, particularly to Hannah More, Miss Berry, and Field-Marshal Conway, are filled with indignant comments on these excesses; and he noted the execution of the King and Queen, and the massacre of the members of their Court, with the most profound detestation of the wretches who had caused them. He felt a still deeper interest in the crimes thus perpetrated in France, when persons whom he had known, either in the gay *salons* he had haunted in Paris, or, subsequently, as temporary ornaments to the gay circles of London, were hunted in a sort of Republican *battue*. It made him enquire, in one of his letters, "Are not the devils escaped out of the swine, and over-running the earth headlong?" * Assuredly a most demoniac frenzy had seized "the swinish multitude," who appeared to think that their best vocation on earth was shedding one another's blood. No doubt Walpole recalled to his memory the excesses he had witnessed of another kind: the profligacy, folly, and arrogance of the great people; the sycophancy, servility, and meanness of the little. Since then what a terrible change had been effected.

* "Walpole Letters." Vol. vi. p. 533.

The fair infidels were now models of heroic propriety on a scaffold, and the equally reckless *beaux esprits* were murmuring pious orisons under the guillotine. The graceful and luxurious *noblesse* so completely paramount in the age of *petits soupers*, were being crushed under the heavy heels of the *sans culottes*.

Walpole had almost from his school days loved to fling out, perhaps somewhat at random, anathemas at church and state. If he was not a republican at heart, few who were so, had ever expressed themselves more strongly; but the bloody saturnalia of republicanism which had wildly raged almost under his personal observation, shocked him so completely, that he adopted at once a political creed so far removed from it, as would secure him from all identification with its inhuman principles.

Towards the conclusion of the year 1796, the recurrence of severe attacks of the gout, made his anxious friends extremely desirous that Lord Orford should quit Strawberry Hill, and take up his residence in Berkeley Square, that he might be within reach of the best medical advice. He consented reluctantly; for the older he grew the more he became attached to his Gothic abode, and he felt assured that if he now left it, he left it for ever. Nevertheless, he was persuaded to make the change, and early in the new year he was once more domiciled in town. A letter to one of his favourite correspondents, the Countess of Ossory, dated January 13, describes his now limited amusements, and complains of the Countess showing his letters, when it is impossible he can have

anything to say that would afford any one amusement: after disclaiming the laurels her ladyship was disposed to offer him, he concludes by professing to be "quite content with a sprig of rosemary thrown after me, when the parson of the parish commits my dust to dust."*

This reference to a dissolution which he felt approaching, was prophetic. It was advancing upon him with rapidly increasing strides. In London he had no letters to dictate, no literary labours to pursue, no artistic employment to occupy his attention, and his mind, wanting exercise, lost its elasticity. His friends strove to entertain him; and the kind sisters, the Misses Berry, were indefatigable in their attentions: but his vocation was gone. The veteran wit now and then endeavoured to establish his own identity, by uttering something in the spirit of days gone by; but the spirit had vanished with the time. He became a fretful valetudinarian, verging on imbecility; complaining of those who were kindest, and blaming those who had never been in fault. A consuming fever came to increase the general debility that was wasting his feeble frame. A few weeks brought him to that pitiable state so graphically described by the great poet as the last stage of existence, and on the 2nd of March, 1797, he sunk into "mere oblivion," the dropped curtain that ends the eventful drama.

During the last years of his life Lord Orford was

* "Walpole Letters." Vol. vi. p. 537.

copiously illustrating contemporary history: and he had also gathered together as far as he was able all the letters he had been writing to his principal friends during the best portion of his existence, with added notes and comments. It was his intention that both should be published; but after the example set him by Lord Hervey, the Rev. William Cole, and other retailers of fashionable and court anecdotes, he placed a barrier on the curiosity of the public, which was not to be removed until an appointed time.

In the library at Strawberry Hill, two wainscot chests or boxes had been deposited, the larger marked with an A. and the lesser with a B.; the former he desired his executors to cord up and seal, and it was to be preserved unopened till the eldest son of his grand-niece Laura, Lady Waldegrave, was twenty-five years old. In pursuance of these instructions the chest A. was in due time opened by the sixth Earl of Waldegrave, and found to contain certain MS. volumes entitled "Memoirs," and several bundles of letters arranged for publication. The memoirs in two separate parts were placed by Lord Waldegrave in the hands of the late Lord Holland, who in 1822 published the first portion as "The Memoirs of the Last Ten Years of the Reign of George II." in two volumes, quarto: of this an edition has recently been given to the public in three volumes, octavo. The other portions remained with Lord Holland till his death, but he did not prepare it for the press. The manuscript devolved to Lord

Euston (Duke of Grafton), and in 1845 was published in four volumes, octavo, under the editorial care of Sir Denis le Marchant.

As early as the year 1768, Walpole projected a collective edition of his works, of which the first volume, and part of the second, were printed in quarto at his own press; but as, from various causes, he found himself unable to proceed further with the design, he committed its completion to his friend, Mr. Berry, to be given to the world after his death. This was published in the year 1798, in five quarto volumes. It contained several productions, that were new to the public, as well as interesting additions and valuable corrections to those already well known, which had been carefully prepared by the author. This edition is remarkable, also, for putting forth the first instalment of that unrivalled contribution to English literature, his Correspondence. It comprised however, only seventeen letters to West, one hundred and forty-nine to Field Marshal Conway, thirty-five to Bentley, ten to Gray, twelve to Chute, fifty-four to the Earl of Strafford, twenty to Lady Hervey, seventeen to the Countess of Ailesbury, twenty-five to Hannah Moore, and twenty-two miscellaneous. A quarto volume, containing his letters to Montagu, appeared in 1818, followed by another in the same year, with his letters to the Rev. William Cole. Then came those to the Earl of Hertford, and to the Rev. Henry Zouch; also in quarto. The success which these met with led to the publication of more extensive collections in octavo, the

last of which, in three volumes, was brought out in the year 1837.

Another series was published in 1833 in three volumes, octavo, edited by the late Lord Dover—these formed the first portion of his correspondence with Sir Horace Mann; though Lord Dover evidently believed he was publishing the entire series. This impression seems to have been shared by others, for in 1840 there came out a collective edition of the "Walpole Letters," in six volumes, octavo, which comprised what had been published in the Mann series, as well as others that had been before published, with a considerable number of new ones from various sources: this collective edition was supposed to contain the greater part if not all the correspondence. Nevertheless in 1843 appeared a "concluding series," of letters to Sir Horace Mann, in four volumes; and in 1847 these were followed by another series to the Countess of Ossory, in two volumes.

Walpole seems to have anticipated the fate to which his Collection was doomed. Describing a dispersion that took place in 1774, he says :—

"I was hurt to see half the ornaments of the chapel and the reliquaries, and, in short, a thousand trifles, exposed to sneers. I am buying a few to keep for the founder's sake. Surely it is very indecent for a favorite relation, who is rich, to show so little remembrance and affection. *I suppose Strawberry will have the same fate.*"*

The fate of Strawberry was still more lamentable. For four and twenty days the apartments, sacred to the Horatian pleasantries, echoed with the hammer

* "Walpole Letters." Vol. v. p. 358.

of the auctioneer. Circumstances, that need not be more particularly alluded to, rendered this degradation unavoidable, and it was only with difficulty that the most sacred of the family possessions could be preserved from the relentless ordeal of "a public sale!" The shrine which had been visited with so much interest and veneration, was now overrun by a well dressed mob, who glanced at its treasures, and at the copious catalogue in which they were enumerated, apparently with a like indifference. But at the sale this indifference, whether feigned or real, changed to the most anxious desire to obtain possession of some relic of the man whose name was invested with so many pleasant associations; and the more interesting portion of "the thousand trifles" created a degree of excitement which would almost have reconciled their proprietor to such a distribution.

Requiescat in Pace.

PEDIGREE OF THE WALPOLES.

I.

THE HOUGHTON LINE.

Reginald de Walpole, living *temp.* WILLIAM the Conqueror.

Richard de Walpole, son of Reginald de Walpole. = Emma, dau. and heir of William de Havelton, or Houton, Lord of Houton, co. Norfolk.

Sir Henry de Walpole, of Houghton and Walpole, living *temp.* HENRY II. = Isabel.

Sir Henry de Walpole, of Houghton and Walpole; taken prisoner, *temp.* JOHN, for adhering to the Barons, and fined £100 A.D. 1216.

Sir John de Walpole, living A.D. 1253; one of the King's retinue in Brittany. = Isabel.

Sir Henry de Walpole, of Walpole and Houghton; *m.* Isabel, dau. of Sir Peter Fitz Osbert, of Somerly, co. Suffolk, and heir to her brother, Sir Roger Fitz Osbert, summoned to Parliament 1294.

Ralph de Walpole, Bishop of Norwich, 1288, and of Ely, 1299.

Sir Henry de Walpole, of Houghton, Knt., M.P. for Norfolk, 9 EDWARD II.; died A.D. 1335. = Alice.

A

Henry de Walpole, of Houton, M.P. for Norfolk, 7 EDWARD III. = Joan . . . .

Henry de Walpole, Esq., of Houghton; returned 12 HENRY VI, amongst those of the first quality in Norfolk, at the time the House of York preferred its claim to the throne; died in 1442, and buried at Houghton. = Margaret, dau. of Sir Oliver le Grosse, of Croswick, Norfolk; buried at Houghton.

Henry Walpole, Esq., of Walpole and Houghton, living *temp.* HENRY VI. = Margery, dau. and eventual heir of Sir John Harsicke, of Southacre, Norfolk.

John Walpole, Esq., of Houghton, living 8 HENRY VII. = Elizabeth, dau. of Robert Shawe, Esq., of Derby.

Thomas Walpole, Esq., of Houghton; will dated 24th May, 1512, and proved 7th April, 1513-4; died 24th January, 1514. = Joan, dau. of William Cobb, Esq., of Sandringham, Norfolk.

Edward Walpole, Esq., of Houghton; born in 1484; buried at Houghton, 2nd Jan., 1558-9. = Lucy, dau. of Sir Terry Robsart, and heiress, (at the death of her brother, Sir John Robsart, and his daughter, Amie, wife of Sir Robert Dudley, Earl of Leicester,) of her great grandfather, Sir John Robsart, K.G.

B

Henry Walpole. = Margaret Holtofte, of Whaplode.

C

B

1. John Walpole, Esq., of Houghton; inherited the Robsart Estates; buried at Houghton, 29 March, 1588. = Catharine, dau. & co-heir of William Calybut, of Coxforth.

2. Richard, of Brakenash, Norfolk; *d.* s.p.; will dated 26th March, 1568. 1. Elizabeth, *m.* to Martin Cobb, Esq., of Snettisham.

3. Terrey, buried at Houghton, 20th Feb., 1582; married twice, and had issue.

C

1. Thomas, ancestor of the Walpoles, of Whaplode, co. Lincoln. 3. Francis.

2. John, a learned lawyer; made Serjeant 1 June, 1554; died 1557. = Catharine, dau. of Edmd. Knyvett, Esq.

4. Christopher, of Docking.

1. Edward, bapt. 25th Dec., 1558; died on his travels abroad.

2. Callibut Walpole, Esq., of Houghton, married in 1591; buried 4th May, 1646, at Houghton. = Elizabeth, dau. and heir of Edmund Bacon, Esq., of Hessett, co. Suff.; buried 1st Feb., 1624.

1. Catharine, *m.* 3rd Oct., 1581, to Philip Russell, Esq., of Burnhamthorp, Norfolk.
2. Bona, *m.* 18th Oct., 1592, to John Amyas, Esq., of Delpham, Norfolk.
3. Elizabeth, *m.* 3rd July, 1591, to Richard Bunting, Esq., of Southcreek.
4. Bridget, *m.* 4th July, 1593, to Henry Paynell, Esq.

Robert Walpole, Esq., of Houghton, born 23rd Sept., 1593; died 1st May, 1663; buried at Houghton. = Susan, dau. of Sir Edward Barkham, Kt., Lord Mayor of London.

John Walpole, of Southcreek, Norfolk; bapt. 20th Nov., 1595. = Abigail, dau. and heir of Froximer Cocket, Esq., of Bromesthorp.

1. Elizabeth, *m.* 1612, to Thos. Clifton, Esq., of Toftrees, Norfolk.
2. Anne, *m.* 1st, 1614, to Thos. Pettus, Esq., and 2ndly, 1619, to Sir Henry Hungate, Knt.

Sir Edward Walpole, K.B., of Houghton; bapt. there 9th Nov., 1621; M.P. for King's Lynn, 1660; made K.B. at Charles's coronation, 1661; died 18th Mar., 1667; buried at Houghton. = Susan, dau. and co-heir of Sir Robert Crane, Bt., of Chilton, co. Suffolk, *m.* 1649; died 7th July, 1667, aged 35.

D

Elizabeth, eld. dau. and co-heir, *m.* Edward Pepys, Esq., Barrister-at-Law.

Bridget, second dau. and co-heir, *m.* to Francis Thoresby, Esq., of Gaywood.

Susan, third dau. and co-heir, *m.* to John Hare, Esq., of Snitterton.

D

Robert Walpole, Esq., of Houghton; bapt. 28th Nov., 1650; M.P. for Castle Rising; Colonel of the Norfolk Militia; died and was buried at Houghton in 1700. = Mary, only dau. and co-heir of Sir Jeffery Burwell, of Rougham, Suffolk; died 14th March, 1711.

Horatio Walpole, Esq.; born 11th July, 1663; died s.p., 17th October, 1717, and was buried at Houghton. = Lady Ann, dau. of Thos. Duke, of Leeds, and widow of Robt. Coke, Esq., of Holkham, Norfolk.

Anne, *m.* to Montfort Spelman, Esq., of Narborough, co. Norfolk.
Mary, *m.* to John Wilson, Esq.
Elizabeth, *m.* to Jas. Hoste, Esq., of Sandringham, Norfolk.
Other issue died young or unmarried.

1. Sir Robert Walpole, K.G., of Houghton, the Celebrated Statesman; born 26th Aug., 1676; M.P. for Lynn Regis.; created 9th Feb., 1742, Baron of Houghton, Viscount Walpole, and Earl of Orford; died 18th March, 1745, and was buried at Houghton. = Catherine, dau. of Sir John Shorter, Lord Mayor of London; *m.* 30th July, 1700; *d.* 20th Aug., 1737; 1st wife.

= Maria, dau. and co-heir of Thos. Skerret, Esq.; died 4th June, 1738.

2. Horatio Walpole, Lord Walpole, of Wolterton. *See that line.*
3. Galfridus, R.N.; M.P.; Post-Master-General; died, s.p., 7th August, 1726.

1. Mary, who *m.* Sir Charles Turner, Bt., of Warham, and had, *inter alios*, a dau. Anne, wife of the Rev. Maurice Suckling, D.D., and grandmother of Horatio Viscount Nelson.
2. Dorothy, *m.* to Chas. Viscount Townshend.
3. Susan, *m.* to Anthony Hamond, Esq. of Wotton, Norfolk.

Robert Walpole, 2nd Earl of Orford, K.B.; Auditor of H.M. Exchequer; Lord Lieut. and Custos Rotulorum of Devon; made Baron Walpole, of Walpole, 10th June, 1723, with remainder, default of the issue male of himself and his father, to the male descendants of his grandfather; died 1st April, 1751. = Margaret, dau. and heir of Samuel Rolle, Esq., of Heanton, co. Devon; she wedded, 2ndly, the Hon. Sewallis Shirley, and died in 1781.

Sir Edward Walpole, K.B; M.P.; died unmarried in 1784, aged 78.

Horace Walpole, M.P.; born in 1717; succeeded his nephew, George, as 4th Earl of Orford; died unmarried 2nd March, 1797, when all his family honours became extinct except the Barony of Walpole, of Walpole.

Mary, *m.* in 1723, George, 3rd Earl of Cholmondeley, K.B., ancestor by her of the present Marquis of Cholmondeley.

George Walpole, 3rd Earl of Orford; born 1st April, 1730; Lord Lieutenant and Custos Rotulorum of Norfolk; Ranger and Keeper of St. James' and Hyde Parks; died unmarried 5th December, 1791.

II.

THE WOLTERTON LINE.

Horatio Walpole, Esq., second son of Robert Walpole, Esq., of Houghton, M.P., by Mary Burwell, his wife; and brother of Sir Robert Walpole, K.G., first Earl of Orford; born 8th December, 1678: a diplomatist of the first grade; Ambassador at the Court of France, and to the States General, &c.: created, 4th June, 1756, BARON WALPOLE, of Wolterton: died 5th January, 1757; buried at Wickmere.

= Mary Magdalen, dau. and co-heir of Peter Lombard, Esq., of Burnham, Norfolk; married 21st July, 1720; died 9th March, 1783, and was buried at Wickmere, in Norfolk.

1. Horatio Walpole, 2nd Lord Walpole, of Wolterton; born 12th June, 1723: succeeded, at the death of Horace Walpole, in 1797, to the Barony of Walpole, of Walpole, and was created EARL OF ORFORD 10th April, 1806; died 24th February, 1809.

= Rachael, 3rd dau. of William, 3rd Duke of Devonshire; married 12th May, 1748; died 8th May, 1805.

2. Thomas, M.P., merchant and banker, of London; *m.* in 1753, Elizabeth, dau. of Sir Joshua Van Neck, Bt., and died in 1803, leaving Thomas, of Stagbury Park, Surrey, Envoy to Munich; Lambert Theodore, Lt.-Col. in the Army; and two daughters.

3. Richard, M.P. for Yarmouth; *m.*, in 1757, Margaret, dau. of Sir Joshua Van Neck, Bt., and died in 1798, leaving a dau., MARY RACHEL, who *m.*, in 1798, the Rev. Ashton Vade, and was mother of Richard Henry Vade Walpole, Esq.

4. Robert, Envoy Extr. and Minister Plen. to the Court of Portugal; *m.* twice, and had issue by each wife.

1. Mary, *m.* to Maurice Suckling, Esq., Capt. R.N.
2. Henrietta Louisa, died unm. in 1824.
3. Anne, died 25th November, 1797.

Horatio Walpole, 2nd Earl of Orford; born 24th June, 1752; died 15th June, 1822.

= Sophia, dau. of Chas. Churchill, Esq., 1st wife.

= Mrs. Chamberlayne, widow of Rev. Edwd. Chamberlayne, 2nd wife.
p.

George, died in 1835.

Mary, *m.*, 4th August, 1777, to Thomas Hussey, Esq., of Galtrim, Meath.

Katherine, died unm. 1831.

A

1. Horatio Walpole, 3rd Earl of Orford, High Steward of Lynn, and Colonel of the West Norfolk Militia; born 14th June, 1783; *m.* 24th July, 1812. = Mary, eldest dau. of the late William Augustus Fawkner, Esq.

2. William, Capt. R.N.; died, unm., 29th June, 1814.
3. John, Lieut.-Col.; *b.* 17th November, 1787.

1. Charlotte, *d.* unm. 1843.
2. Maria, *m.* Martin John West, Esq.
3. Harriet, widow of Sir William Hoste, Bart., K.C.B., Capt. R.N.
4. Georgiana Mary, *m.* to the Rev. Joseph Wolff.
5. Catherine, *m.* to Henry Lawes Long, Esq.

1. Horatio, Lord Walpole, born 18th April, 1813. = Harriett Bettina Frances, only child of the Hon. Sir Fleetwood B. R. Pellew.

2. Henry, *b.* 1st May, 1818; *m.*, 3rd July, 1845, Cecilia Elizabeth, dau. of the late John Macalister, Esq., of Strathaird.

3. Frederick, Lieut. R.N.
1. Rachel Katharine, *m.* to Viscount Pollington.
2. Dorothy Fanny, *m.* to Reginald Henry Nevill, Esq.

Dorothy Elizabeth Mary, born 24th October, 1842.

Maude Mary, born 9th Aug., 1844.

DESCENDANTS OF SIR EDWARD WALPOLE, K.B.

The Hon. Sir Edward Walpole, K.B., Chief Secretary of Ireland; 2nd son of the Right Hon. Sir Robert Walpole, K.G., 1st Earl of Orford: died unm. 1784.

- Laura, eldt. illegitimate dau. of Sir Edward Walpole, K.B. = Hon. & Rev. Frederick Keppel, Bishop of Exeter; died 1777.
  - 1. Frederick Keppel, Esq., of Lexham Hall, Norfolk =
    - Elizabeth Laura; *m.* her cousin George, 4th Earl Waldegrave. =
  - 1. Anna Maria; *m.* Lt.-Gen. William Stapleton, and *d.* 1836.
    - Charlotte Maria; *m.* George Henry, 4th Duke of Grafton, and was mother of the present Duke, and other issue.
  - 2. Laura; *m.* to Lord Southampton, and *d.* 1798.
  - 3. Charlotte Augusta; *m.* to Robert Foote, Esq.
    - Anna Horatio; *m.* in 1786, Admiral Lord Hugh Seymour, and was mother of Rear-Admiral Sir George Francis Seymour, and other issue.
- Maria, 2nd illegitimate dau. of Sir Edward Walpole, K.B. = 1st. James, 2nd Earl Waldegrave; *m.* 1759; *d.* 1763.
- 2d. H.R.H. William Henry, Duke of Gloucester; brother of King Geo. III.; *m.* 1766. =
  - H.R.H. William Frederick, Duke of Gloucester, K.G., G.C.B.; died 1834. = The Princess Mary; dau. of King George III.
    - s.p.
  - Sophia Matilda; Ranger of Greenwich Park; died 1844.
- Charlotte, third illegitimate dau. of Sir Edward Walpole, K.B. = Lionel 4th Earl of Dysart.
  - s. p.

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